

Anyone identified the ship on this stamp?



The Coastal Express (Hurtigruten) Steamers of Norway

Hurtigruten can trace its origins more than 100 years back. It was established in 1893 by government contract to improve communications along Norway's long, jagged coastline. Originally, only one shipping company, Vesteraalens Dampskibsselskab, was willing to take on the job of sailing the then poorly charted waters. The voyage was especially difficult during the long, dark winters. *Hurtigruten*, which roughly translates as "the express route," was a substantial breakthrough for communities along its path. Mail from central Norway to Hammerfest had taken three weeks in the summer (and up to five months in winter), now it could be delivered in a mere seven days.

Encouraged by **VESTERAALEN'** several other companies obtained on the route, and *Hurtigruten* service the current round Bergen in the and Kirkenes in the A fleet of 11 ships each of the 34 ports twice daily; once "Nordgående" and once by (Southbound).

Beginning in the role of *Hurtigruten* Operating subsidiaries gradually phased operators put more tourism. New, more luxurious introduced, with to Jacuzzi, bars, and other comforts.

Hurtigruten still serves important passenger and cargo needs, and operates 365 days a year.

The last two independent shipping companies, Ofotens og Vesteraalens Dampskibsselskab (OVDS) and Troms Fylkes Dampskibsselskap (TFDS), merged on March 1, 2006 and changed their name to Hurtigruten Group (Hurtigruten ASA from April 2007). Besides the traditional coastal voyage, the new company also operates ferries and high-speed regional express ships in Norway, and exotic Greenland, South American and Antarctic cruises.

Due to financial difficulties, several of the company's holdings are up for sale and three ships laid-up until the current situation can be resolved. Negotiations with the Norwegian Government are ongoing (fall 2008) and the company hopes to have a restructuring plan in place soon. They currently (until 2012) receive a yearly 250 mill. Nkr compensation package from the Government to keep the daily sailing schedule from Bergen to Kirkenes. *(Continued on page 18)*

POST- og PASSAGERRUTE
for
Dampskibet „Vesteraalen“ Capt. R. With fra 2den Juli til 2den September.

Nordover.											Sydover.											
Anløbssteder	Dage	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	
		Juli	Juli	Juli	Juli	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.	
Fra Trondhjem . . .	Søndag 8 Fm.	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27												
- Rørvik	- 7 Em.																					
- Brønnø	- 11 1/2 "																					
- Sannæssjøen . . .	Mandag 3 Fm.	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28												
Til Bodo	- 12 Md.																					
- Svolvær	- 2 Em.																					
- Lødingen	- 8 "																					
- Harstad	- 12 Mn.																					
Til Tromsø	Tirsdag 4 Fm.	4	11	18	25	Aug.	8	15	22	29												
- Skjervøy	- 12 Md.																					
Fra Tromsø	- 4 Em.																					
- Rørvik	- 9 "																					
Til Hammerfest . .	Onsdag 4 Fm.	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30												
Fra Hammerfest . .	Onsdag 8 Fm.																					
- Skjervøy	- 3 Em.																					
Til Tromsø	- 8 "																					
Fra Tromsø	- 12 Mn.																					
- Harstad	Torsdag 8 Fm.																					
- Lødingen	- 11 1/2 "																					
- Svolvær	- 4 Em.																					
Til Bodo	- 10 "																					
Fra Bodo	- 12 Mn.																					
- Sannæssjøen . . .	Freitag 9 Fm.																					
- Brønnø	- 1 Em.																					
- Rørvik	- 5 "																					
Til Trondhjem . . .	Lørdag 4 Fm.																					

Anmærkninger.

- Skibet afgaar fra Trondhjem 1 Time efter Hurtigrutetogets Ankomst fra Kristiania.
- Passagerfragterne ere: 40 Øre paa late Plads, 25 Øre paa 2den og 15 Øre paa 3die Plads pr. Mil. Tar- & Returbilletter udstedes paa alle Pladse til Skibets Anløbssteder og gjælder i 6 Maaneder, forsaavidt ikke Parten til det Sted, hvortil Billetten er udstedt, inden den Tid er ophørt
- Til de fyr Ruten gjældende Takster og Regler medtages til samtlige Rutessteder Ildgods, forsk Fisk i Is, Vildt, Frugt og Grensager. Til Byerne medtages ogsaa andet Gods efter det almindelige Fragtregulativ. Omladning til og fra sydligere Steder vil foregaa i Trondhjem uden Udgift for Vareeierne.
- Passagererne kan ved at skifte Skib i Trondhjem ogsaa den hurtigste Befordring paa Kyststrækningen mellem Bergen—Hammerfest saavel nord- som sydover. ligesom de efter kort Ophold kunne viderebefordres:

Fra Trondhjem til Kristiansund og Mellemsteder: - Levanger, Stenkjær - Sannæssjøen - Ranen, Vefsen og Øerne - Bodo - Folden - Svolvær - Lofotstederne - Lødingen - Korsnes, Trane m. fl. St. - Harstad - Berg, Andenes, Kvæfjord - Tromsø - Lyngen, Indre Malangen, Kjøsen - Hammerfest - Langfjorden, Besøkop, Kaa fjord, Talvik	Kl. 7 1/4 Lørdag Morgen med S/S „Midthorland“ eller „Nordmørø“ - 12 - Middag - „Kong Onkar“ og „Levanger“ - 9 Mandag Form. - „Thorolf Kveldulfsen, og „Holgeland“ - 2 Tirsdag - „Laurvig“ - Middag - Lokalskibet „Namnes“ - Onsdag Middag - Tromsø Amtsskibe do - 7 - Morgen - Lokalskibet „Nor“
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- Nærmere Oplysninger kan erholdes ved Henvendelse til Selskabets Contor i Stokmarknes og til Expediteren i Trondhjem Johan Krohg samt til Expediterne Arent Angel, Bodo, With Mack, Tromsø, J. O. Finckenhagen, Hammerfest, Holger Fischer, Kristiansund. Ruten findes altid i „Norges Kommunikationer.“

The first time table for the 'Hurtigrute' published on July 2, 1893 by Vesteraalens Dampskibsselskab. Source: Norwegian Post

early success, shipping concessions the expanded to trip between southwest, far northeast. ensures that is visited by (Northbound) "Sørgående"

1980s, the changed. were out and the emphasis on bigger and ships were attention given restaurants However,