



The stylish and comfortable sweaters from Tingvoll Ull are made from Norwegian wool in its natural colours.

Tingvoll Ull - from fields to fashion

Natural, green, and fashionable - Tingvoll Ull is the maker of tradition and culture in the form of knitwear. Every step of the company's process, from pasture to the patterns, pays homage to Norwegian nature without harming it.

By Celina Tran | Photos: Tingvoll Ull

Knitting in Norway traces its history back to the 1600s, though it's widely assumed that the technique has been part of the Norwegian culture since the Viking Age. No matter its origins, knitting and knitwear have weaved their way into culture and society, becoming an essential part of the country's history. Today, Norwegian knitwear is famous worldwide, with patterns such as the *åttebladsrose* and colourful sweaters finding their way into homes everywhere.

"There is, however, one thing the Norwegian market misses, and that is knitwear

produced locally, from local wool," says Arnar Lyche, manager and founder of Tingvoll Ull.



Lyche explains that most of the knitwear sold in Norway, today, is produced abroad with foreign wool. It was therefore important to Tingvoll Ull that their production was entirely Norwegian.

"We source our wool from local sheep, clean it, take it to a local business that spins the yarn, before knitting it in our own workshop," he explains. Rose Bergslid, who's the co-founder of Tingvoll Ull, explains that because they don't use any added colouring in their wool, Tingvoll Ull's products are 100 per cent biodegradable, "The Norwegian wool industry already uses white wool extensively, but we've noticed that the sheep with coloured wool don't get the same appreciation. So instead of colouring white wool, we source our colours naturally from local sheep," she says.

"The great thing about our sweaters is that because they're all-natural, they don't harm nature. By the time they're worn out and ready to return to the earth, they can do so without impacting the environment," she says.

Both Lyche and Bergslid note that Tingvoll Ull is a company that prioritises the community, locality, and the planet, which is why its products are sourced and produced locally, from fields to fashion.

Knitwear: A small piece of history and identity

When Lyche started out as a sheep farmer 10 years ago, he had no idea that the economy in naturally coloured wool was measly. A novice in the industry, he was shocked to learn that he was to receive only 930NOK for a whopping 230kg of wool, especially as the shearing of the sheep had cost him several thousand kroner. Later, during a trip to Iceland, he saw how the locals made and sold wool clothing on every corner, and a lightbulb flashed. The idea of a Tingvoll Ull began to blossom.

Along with Bergslid, whom he had previously worked with, he set out on a journey to start a fashion fairytale.

"We've both worked many years in an office and felt ready to do something prac-



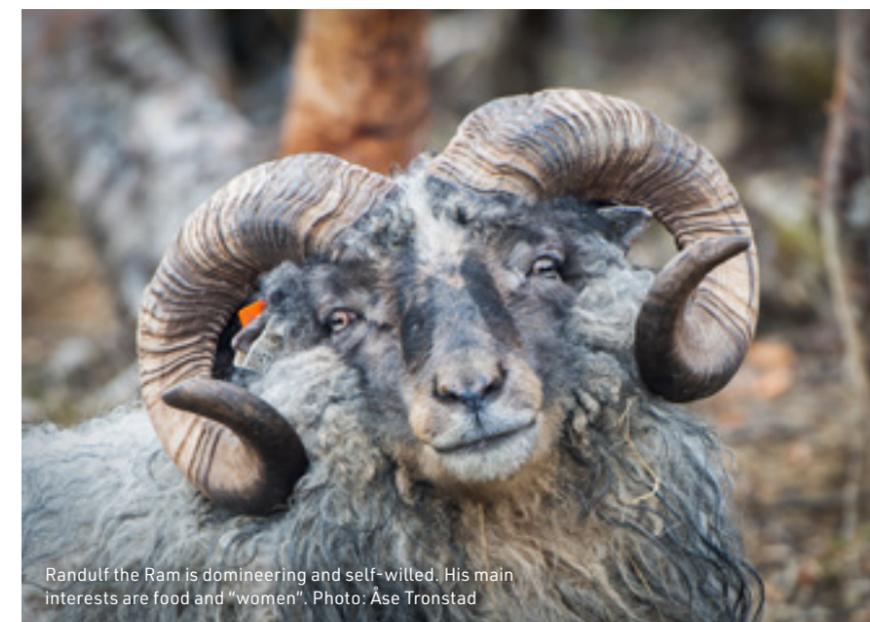
tical, but also concrete for the environment. The fashion industry already takes a massive toll on the planet, so we figured that Tingvoll Ull would be our way of taking action, offering a green fashion option," says Bergslid.

Everything about Tingvoll Ull's production is by the community, for the community, with patterns being designed by the local area's avid knitting enthusiasts. Its collections, *Fornnybar*, *Kystgensen* and *Jorddyrkeren* all represent different parts of nature or community, with *Jorddyrkeren* being a tribute to the coun-

try's farmers and food-producers, while *Kystgensen* represents Tingvoll's local coastal culture.

"Norwegian wool is high-quality, strong, and warm. Historically, it was also essential to survival, so it quickly became a part of our heritage and culture," says Lyche. "When you buy a Tingvoll Ull sweater, you're essentially buying a tiny bit of the area - a piece of Norway."

www.tingvoll-ull.no
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Randulf the Ram is domineering and self-willed. His main interests are food and "women". Photo: Ase Tronstad

