



*Deep quarry displaying carved faces, and a large unfinished millstone at the bottom*

The millstone quarries at Hyllestad are situated on the Norwegian west coast. From the Roman Period until the early 20th century, production of rotating millstones left behind huge quarry landscapes all over Europe. In Norway, the preferred rock for millstones was mica schist containing grains of garnet or staurolite. This bimodal distribution between hard and soft minerals proved ideal for the purpose of grinding. The Hyllestad quarry landscape is one of the largest and most long-lived quarry sites in the country, displaying more or less continuous production from the Pre-Viking Period until the last millstone was quarried in 1929. During the Viking Period and the Middle ages, the millstones were carved directly from the bedrock, leaving behind circular “negatives” on the quarry floors. Later on, the extraction techniques changed towards blasting with black powder when it was introduced into the Norwegian mining sector. Today, the Hyllestad quarry landscape remains as a well preserved testimony of quarrying through history. In addition to the many hundred quarries, there are also remnants of roads and harbors, from which the millstones were shipped. The Hyllestad quarry landscape is easily accessible for the interested traveler, thanks to the municipality and enthusiasts in the local community. There is an outside museum containing several of the most interesting quarries and in the summertime one can grind grains on handmills in a medieval camp just beside the museum. *(Tom Heldal)*



*Unfinished millstone left in a quarry*



*Half-finished millstone blanks, still attached to the bedrock*

*A landscape of quarry faces, spoil heaps and roads, overgrown by dense vegetation*

