

Scandinavian Explorer

10 Days | Copenhagen to Stockholm



Explore some of the highlights of Scandinavia on this 10 day tour. From the cosmopolitan Copenhagen in Denmark, to the outgoing Oslo in Norway. You'll be introduced to stunning scenery at some of Norway's most impressive Fjords, take a ride on the most beautiful train journey in the world, the Flam railway, before ending in the scintillating Swedish city of Stockholm.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Oslo - discover the history of Norway's capital. A city surrounded by beautiful forests and Oslofjord
- Copenhagen - explore one of Europe's most romantic capital cities
- Bergen - marvel at the beautiful Norwegian city including UNESCO listed Bryggen old wharf and wooden buildings
- Stockholm - roam the majestic streets of the Swedish capital. From the Royal Palace to the famous City Hall
- Hardanger Bridge - travel across one of the longest suspension bridges in the world with spectacular views of Hardanger fjord

- Vorringsfossen waterfall - gaze upon the towering waterfall which cascades down in to the valley below
- Flam - take an optional trip on the Flam railway, one of the most scenic journeys in the world

What's Included

- 8 nights 4 star accommodation
- 1 overnight ferry: Copenhagen to Oslo
- 9 breakfasts & 4 dinners
- English speaking guide
- One arrival transfer on day 1 and one departure transfer on day 10 included per booking.

What's Not Included

- Items of a personal nature and additional meals
- International flights to/from our tour start/end points and visas
- Gratuity for your tour guide. Tipping your tour guide is an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Copenhagen

Arrival in Copenhagen, a regular transfer from Copenhagen Airport to your hotel will be provided. **Overnight - Copenhagen**

Day 2 : Copenhagen



Copenhagen - Oslo. Copenhagen is Scandinavia's largest and most lively city and one of Europe's most romantic capitals with its old castles and churches and charming squares and harbours. The morning sightseeing tour will acquaint us with all the city's treasures: the Little Mermaid guarding the port, the Royal Castle, Nyhavn with its restaurants and small boats and the City Hall Square. In the afternoon we embark on the DFDS Seaways overnight ferry bound for Oslo. The ferry offers a wide choice of restaurants, bars, shops and much more. Dinner on-board. **Overnight - Ferry - Copenhagen to Oslo (B, D)**

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Day 3 : Hallingdal Valley



Oslo - Eidfjord. Upon arrival to Oslo our tour heads directly to Hoenefoss and on to Nesbyen which are surrounded by a landscape alternating between forests of pines and lakes. Our next stop is the beautiful Hallingdal Valley, where we visit the town of Gol before we arrive in Geilo, a small town surrounded by mountains. Our tour continues to Hardangervidda where we visit Voringfossen waterfall before we arrive to Eidfjord, where our hotel is located. Dinner will be enjoyed at the hotel this evening.
Overnight - Eidfjord (B, D)

Day 4 : Bergen



Eidfjord - Bergen. This morning takes us further into the breath-taking Norwegian nature. We cross the splendid Hardanger fjord, by travelling across Hardanger Bridge which has one of the longest suspension bridge spans in the world. On the other side of the bridge we pass Nordheimsund and crossing birch forests we arrive to Bergen – known as the capital of the fjords. Situated on a peninsula surrounded by 7 mountains the history of Bergen is closely connected with the sea and this is very noticeable in the city, especially at the city's picturesque waterfront. The afternoon sightseeing tour introduces us to this remarkable Hanseatic city with the Bryggen area of old wooden houses, the traditional Fish Market and the

city centre with the St. Mary's Church and Haakon's Hall. **Overnight - Bergen (B)**

Day 5 : Naeroy Valley



Bergen - Stalheim. The morning is at leisure to explore more of the stunning Norwegian fjord capital. In the early afternoon we travel to the historical town of Voss, which has a scenic background of snow clad mountains. After a break here we continue towards the Naeroy Valley and Stalheim, offering a stunning view down the Stalheim Gorge. Dinner at hotel.
Overnight - Stalheim (B, D)

Day 6 : Flam Railway & Fjords



Stalheim - Flam - Fagernes. Today we continue through the fjord region with its formidable water-drowned glacial valleys, flanked by impossible rugged terrain to Gudvangen where we cross the Naroyfjord and reach the village of Flam. Here is offered an optional tour – Flam Railway: one of the most famous and most breath-taking railway journeys in the world. In the afternoon the journey continues along the Aurlandfjord. We do a photo stop at the famous Borgund Stave Church before we continue to Fagernes. Dinner at hotel. **Overnight - Fagernes (B, D)**

Day 7 : Oslo



Fagernes - Oslo. After breakfast we leave the majestic Norwegian fjords behind us and travel back towards Oslo which we reach early in the afternoon. Founded in 1048 Oslo is Scandinavia's oldest capital and today it is a very pleasant and casual city with an interesting jumble of historical and modern architecture. Upon arrival in Oslo we start the morning sightseeing tour. We enjoy a walk around the Frogner Park decorated with the unique sculptures of Gustav Vigeland. We pass by the City Hall and the main street, Karl Johan, leading to the Royal Palace. **Overnight - Oslo (B)**

Day 8 : Oslo to Stockholm

Oslo - Stockholm. Today we head for Stockholm, passing through Norwegian forests. We cross the border and enter the county of Varmland in Sweden. Throughout the balance of the day we drive through typical Swedish landscapes with fertile farmland, blue lakes and thick forests, which evoke an atmosphere of intriguing fairy-tales. In the afternoon we arrive at Stockholm.
Overnight - Stockholm (B)

Day 9 : Stockholm Sights



Stockholm – the beauty on the water – is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful capitals in the world, built on 14 islands and protected from the sea by Skargarden,

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the Stockholm archipelago. The morning sightseeing tour takes us to the Old Town with the Royal Palace, Stockholm Cathedral and the city centre with its famous City Hall. The afternoon is free for individual visits.

Overnight - Stockholm (B)

Day 10 : Stockholm

A departure transfer from your hotel to Arlanda Airport will be provided today. (B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Hotel Quality Voringfoss

Overlooking the Hardanger Fjord, this traditional hotel boasts a stunning mountain setting. Its guestrooms offer plenty of natural light, as well as flat-screen TVs and free WiFi. Start your day with the hearty breakfast buffet, packed with organic, healthy options, or in the summer months enjoy the a la carte dinner menu in the hotel's restaurant. You can also enjoy a drink or two after a day of exploring in the Fossatrommo bar and unwind with your fellow travellers.



Scandic Ornen

Start your day properly at the Scandic Ornen by choosing from any of the 100 different items on offer at the hotel's breakfast buffet. Later in the day, come back for even more gastronomic delights and feast on fresh meat, seafood and vegetables from the restaurant's a la carte menu. Once you're thoroughly satisfied, head to your bright and breezy room, which has been expertly decorated with a neutral colour palette. For active guests, the hotel offers

a well-equipped gym and free bicycle hire. The accommodation is just a short walk from UNESCO-listed Bryggen Wharf and Torgallmenningen Square.



Hotel Stalheim

Built in 1750 as an inn to accommodate travellers following the mail route between Bergen and Oslo, Hotel Stalheim has grown from offering only 20 beds to boasting 124 ensuite guestrooms. Each one offers stunning panoramic views of the breathtaking Naeroyfjord and Naeroy Valley, as does the hotel's bar and restaurant, which serves buffet style and a la carte cuisine. Enjoy a stroll through the hotel's terrace garden and soak up the views, or take advantage of the many beautiful hiking trails nearby.



Hotel Thon Scandic Valdres

Set on the shores of Strondafjorden, Hotel Thon Scandic Valdres offers comfortable guestrooms with modern décor, complete with free WiFi and some with the additional benefit of a balcony. A complimentary breakfast buffet is served in the restaurant, which won the best hotel breakfast in the county in 2019. There's also a steakhouse and bar offering beautiful views over the fjord. During your stay, you may like to take advantage of the indoor pool, gym or sauna, or perhaps unwind in the library lounge.



Thon Hotel Opera

Located right in the heart of the bustling city of Oslo, the Thon Hotel Opera is a colossal, high-rise building, with chic interior design and stunning views of the Fjords. Rooms are spacious and attractively decorated with splashes of colour and plush furnishings. For the more active traveller, there is a fitness centre located on the fourth floor. When it comes to dining, guests can enjoy a buffet breakfast and lunch and an a la carte dinner every day in the hotel's glorious dining hall. The hotel is well located just 100 yards from Oslo Central Station and 350 yards from the Opera House.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Norway Country Guide

Please note

This tour is operated in conjunction with our trusted partner and you will join travellers who booked through different operators, not solely On The Go

This itinerary should be used as a guide only and may vary from day to day depending on road & weather conditions.

Wi-Fi

Norway offers good internet access across its cities and larger towns with WiFi found in cafes and public spaces across the country. Many hotels provide free WiFi access to their guests and there is often free WiFi on board buses and trains though registration is usually required and access limited by time. Cruise ships that operate through Norway's fjords

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usually charge for WiFi and prices can be expensive

Visas

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 3 months from your planned date of departure from Norway.

UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and USA passport holders do not require a visa for a stay of less than 90 days

Norway is part of the borderless region known as the Schengen Area and South African residents require a Schengen visa in order to enter Norway. A passport valid for at least three months from your departure is required and a visa will only be issued if blank pages are available and if the passport has been issued in the last 10 years. Requirements for the procurement of a Norway visa are subject to change but application requirements include round-trip travel itinerary specifying entry and exit dates from the Schengen state and proof of funds to support yourself during your stay, along with a copy of your travel insurance policy. Visas are issued by the Norwegian embassy in Pretoria.

Currency

The official currency in Norway is Norwegian krone, written as NOK. Banknotes come in denominations of 50kr, 100kr, 200kr, 500kr and 1000kr. Check OANDA for the latest exchange rates.

Pound Sterling, US Dollars, Euro and other major currencies can be easily exchanged in Norway with banks and bureau de changes offering the better exchange rates once in destination. It's advisable to request bank notes in smaller denominations, as it can sometimes be hard to get change from large notes and smaller notes are handy for smaller purchases. Debit and credit cards are widely accepted in restaurants, shops, hotels and even taxis across Norway and you'll find ATMs throughout the country, even in smaller towns,

though withdrawal fees may be charged. Traveller's Cheques are not recommended as they're often difficult to exchange and incur high fees.

Time & Voltage

Norway works on Central European Time (CET) which is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed in Norway with the clocks turning forward one hour at the end of March and one hour backwards at the end of October each year.

The standard voltage in Norway is 230 volts, 50Hz AC. Primary sockets generally require Continental or European plugs of the two round pin variety. We recommend that you pack a universal travel adaptor. You will need a voltage converter and plug adaptor in order to use U.S. appliances.

Tipping

Salaries are really good in Norway with waiters and bar staff earning a decent wage, which means tipping is not required nor expected. Restaurants and bars include the service charge in your bill though in upmarket restaurants where table service is an important part of the experience, a tip is appreciated. It's also uncommon to tip taxi drivers or hotel staff.

Food & Drink

Norwegian cuisine primarily focuses on game and fish, resources that are found in abundance in the country's pristine woodlands and surrounding seas. Traditionally meat would feature in every main meal whether it's slow-cured lamb's leg (fenalår) served with vegetables for dinner or smoked salmon (røkt laks) served with scrambled eggs, dill, mustard sauce and bread for lunch. Norway's long winters meant that preserving food was necessary to last the season, which gave rise to a fondness for cured fish (tørrfisk), often eaten at breakfast with lefse, the national flatbread, and Jarlsberg cheese.

Preserved meat and sausages are popular and eaten as part of a spread or served in hearty stews. Norway's meat specialties include moose - said to taste similar to

venison, reindeer - wonderfully lean meat, and grouse - tender with a mild gamey taste. These meats grace restaurant menus in autumn when hunting season begins. Often meat is accompanied by potatoes (mashed, boiled or pureed) and a cream-based sauce or thick gravy.

Like elsewhere in Europe, bread is an important staple in the Norwegian diet and tends to be coarse in texture and made with whole grain flour. Rye bread is typically used for open-sandwiches, known locally as smørbrød, a buttered slice of bread topped with a range of ingredients including cheese, caviar, hard boiled egg, herring, pâté, salad leaves, herbs, sliced cucumber, tomato and pickled beets.

Norway's climate and countryside are the ideal environment for wild fruits with strawberries, bilberries, lingonberries, raspberries and apples all particularly intense in flavour and used in desserts and sweet treats such as krumkake - a cross between a waffle and a pancake that's rolled up and filled with whipped cream.

The people of Norway love their coffee, so much so in fact that they are the second highest consumer of coffee in the world. This means you'll find quality barista-style coffee shops in all of Norway's cities and larger towns. As far as alcoholic beverages go, Norway produces a number of pilsners, red beers and malt beers with a rich flavour. With a long history, mjød (mead - a famous honey wine) is a very traditional Scandinavian drink and graces the shelves of many tourist shops though it's not a commonly-drunk beverage.

In recent decades Norway's dining scene has vastly improved with a much better selection of international cuisine and in the larger cities you'll find a respectable choice of dining options. Today, Norwegian chefs lean towards the use of locally produced organic ingredients, creating modern versions of traditional dishes.

Water: Tap water is safe to drink in Norway as it is of fantastic quality and unlikely to cause any stomach upsets. Avoid drinking from river streams when out in the countryside,

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however, as water may contain harmful parasites

Health Requirements

You should seek medical advice from your local health practitioner before travelling to Norway and ensure that you receive all of the appropriate vaccinations. Allow yourself 6-8 weeks to do so. As a guide, vaccinations against tetanus are recommended. The medical facilities and healthcare in Norway are excellent and available for free or at a reduced cost to European Union citizens with a valid EHIC form or its replacement ID card.

During winter in Norway the main health risk is hypothermia and frostbite. With temperatures reaching well below freezing across Norway, ensure you have packed enough warm clothing and thermal under layers, as well as good quality gloves, socks and hat to keep body extremities warm and covered. In summer mosquitoes and blackflies are a particular nuisance so take a DEET-based repellent and keep covered up.

Shopping

With a long tradition of knitting, Norway is an excellent place to pick up a wool sweater or scarf. Knitwear is of high quality and comes in a variety of timeless, practical designs and functional colours. Wool is also used for thermals and outdoor clothing, perfectly suited to the cold temperatures of Norway's winter so it's worth looking out for quality pieces while you're here.

High-end shoppers will find ample shopping opportunities for design pieces from furniture to lighting. Scandinavian design is particularly known for its use of traditional materials and contemporary styles.

In Norse mythology and Scandinavian folklore trolls are believed to be the very first inhabitants of the region and although you're unlikely to bump into a real-life troll, you can always bring home a miniature ceramic or plastic figurine. Another good souvenir option is a Viking drinking bowl made from wood and usually hand-painted or a Bjørklund cheese slicer, Norway's most famous invention.

Prices of goods in Norway are fixed though you may be able to bargain a little off the price for goods sold at markets.

Prices of goods

Norway has one of the highest price levels for personal goods and services in all of Europe and its reputation as an expensive travel destination is well-deserved. Norwegians are paid a good living wage and there's little disparity in income but for an international visitor, the exchange rate means that Norway is a costly holiday.

To put it in some perspective, a main course at an inexpensive restaurant costs around USD\$18 while a three-course meal at a nicer restaurant will set you back closer to USD \$50. A half litre bottle of locally produced beer purchased at a bar will cost around \$8 while a small bottle of water is around USD\$2.50 though you can save money here by drinking tap water instead.

While on a tour in which your accommodation, local transportation, breakfast and touring is included in the price, we recommend you budget USD\$50-80 per person per day for additional meals, drinks and items of a personal nature.

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