



# Southern Norway

## Includes »

Tønsberg.....	87
Larvik.....	90
Kragerø.....	92
Risør.....	93
Arendal.....	94
Grimstad.....	96
Lillesand.....	98
Kristiansand.....	98
Mandal.....	103
Flekkefjord.....	104
Kongsberg.....	107
The Telemark Canal.....	110
Rjukan.....	113
Seljord.....	117

## Best Places to Eat

- » Blom Restaurant (p95)
- » Bølgen & Moi (p101)
- » Has Nabaen (p102)
- » Haven Brasserie (p97)
- » Restaurant Havariet (p87)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Rjukan Hytteby & Kro (p114)
- » Buøy Camping (p112)
- » Lampeland Hotell (p109)
- » Lysko Gjestegaard (p91)
- » Grimstad Hotell (p97)

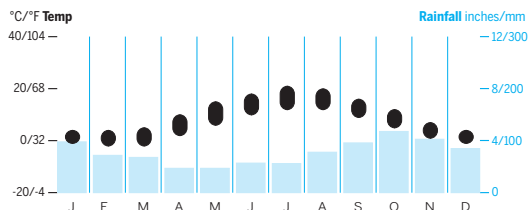
## Why Go?

Norway's southern coastline has always drawn Norwegian tourists in summer droves, and with beautiful coastal villages all dressed in white looking out across an island-studded sea it's not difficult to see why. The coast also offers a chance to see a totally different kind of Norway from that of the fjords and high plateaus of the tourist brochures.

Venture inland though and the real interest begins as the scenery turns ever more dramatic. The place we love above all others in the region's interior is Rjukan, gateway to some of Norway's most scenic high country – the Hardangervidda National Park and the spectacularly formed mountain of Gausta. Elsewhere, scattered among a landscape smothered in forest and decorated in dark lakes filled with beavers, you'll discover idyllic little villages, wooden stave churches and a rich traditional culture.

## When to Go

### Kristiansand



### February–March

It's prime season for ice-climbing, skiing and dog-sledding in Rjukan.

**July** The south coast beach towns are at their most lively.

### August–September

Inland trails are at their best and autumn colours start to shine.

## THE COAST

You probably didn't come to Norway for the beaches, but if you did, expect to be accompanied by masses of local tourists drawn by reasonable beaches and picturesque islands. The towns along the coast are pretty, if way overpriced in summer.

### Tønsberg

POP 37,500

Tønsberg is the oldest town in Norway, although so distant are its origins that few interesting remnants remain in what is now a largely modern town. There are nonetheless a few Viking-era ruins and a decrepit castle that together make Tønsberg worth a brief detour as you head along the coast.

#### Sights

##### Tønsberg Castle

FORTRESS

(Castrum Tunsbergis; admission free; ☉tower noon-5pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, shorter hr rest of yr) Tønsberg Castle, spread across the hill behind the town, was the largest fortress in Norway in the 13th century. In 1503 the Swedes destroyed the fortress and little remains of the castle itself. Nonetheless, the modern (1888), 17m-high **Slottsfjellstårnet tower** provides a good viewpoint over the ruins. Parts of the 600m-long outer wall remain intact, while the extant medieval stone foundations include **King Magnus Lagabøte's keep**, the 1191 **Church of St Michael**, the **hall of King Håkon Håkonsson** and various **guard towers**. The park is always open.

##### Vestfold County Museum

MUSEUM



(Vestfold Fylkesmuseum; www.vfm.no, in Norwegian; Farmannsveien 30; adult/child Nkr60/10; ☉10am-4pm Mon-Fri, noon-5pm Sat & Sun mid-May–mid-Sep, shorter hr rest of yr) At the foot of Slottsfjellet (Castle Rock) at the northern end of town is Vestfold County Museum, a five-minute walk northwest of the train station. Highlights include displays on the excavation of the impressive *Oseberg* Viking ship (now shown in Oslo's Viking Ship Museum, p57), a collection of historic period-furnished farm buildings, and a section on Tønsberg's whaling history.

#### Sleeping

##### Tønsberg Vandrerhjem

HOSTEL €

(☎33 31 21 75; tonsberg@hihostels.no; Dronning Blancasgata 22; dm Nkr350, s/tw with shared bathroom Nkr550/650, tw with bathroom

Nkr750, f Nkr950;  ) This exceptionally well-run and friendly hostel is well equipped, clean and tidy and just a five-minute walk from the train station. The cosy common areas would be the envy of many a fancy hotel. A good breakfast is served. The reception area is shut between noon and 3pm.



##### Thon Hotel Brygga

BUSINESS HOTEL €€

(☎33 34 49 00; www.thonhotels.no; Nedre Langgate 40; r from Nkr995;  ) Inside a traditional wooden warehouse, this modern waterfront hotel has pleasant (if smallish) rooms and great breakfasts, and is popular with families.

##### Quality Hotel Tønsberg

BUSINESS HOTEL €€

(☎33 00 41 00; www.choice.no; Ollebukta 3; d from Nkr1088;  ) Another excellent option, this branch of the Quality Hotel chain has stylish (in a Nordic minimalist kind of way) rooms by the waterfront. Parking is a steep Nkr189 per day.

#### Eating

Tønsberg has dozens of decent restaurants, with the best atmosphere along the water.



##### Restaurant Havariet

INTERNATIONAL €€

(☎33 35 83 90; Nedre Langgate 30c; mains Nkr122-150; ☉11am-1am) Arguably the most popular of the waterfront eateries, this place offers solid pub grub in a warm and inviting interior. It has good-value lunch deals and plenty of salty marine life on the menu, including a very tasty prawn, bacon and camembert salad.

##### Roar I Bva

SEAFOOD €€

(Nedre Langgate; sandwiches Nkr70-80, mains Nkr150-180) This cute, oversized wooden shack is half-fishmongers and half-seafood cafe. However you choose to class it, the well-priced fish is so fresh it might well flop off your plate and back into the sea.

#### Information

The **tourist office** (☎48 06 33 33; www.visittonsberg.com; Storgaten 38; ☉9am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat mid-Jun–early Aug, 9am-2pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is just off the main square.

#### Getting There & Around

The **Tønsberg Rutebilstasjon** (☎33 30 01 00; Jernbanegaten) is a block south of the train station. Nor-Way Bussekspress buses run to/from Kristiansand (Nkr240, 4½ hours, one to two daily) via most coastal towns en route, including