



The Western Fjords

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Why Go?

Scoured and gouged by glaciers, ancient and modern, western Norway's deep, sea-drowned valleys are pincered by steep, rugged terrain. It's a landscape that is so utterly unique and so profoundly beautiful that it is one of the most desirable destinations in the world.

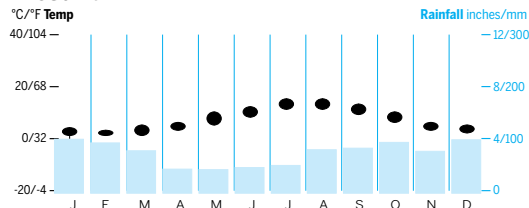
Although overshadowed by the sublime fjords, the coastline is nonetheless extraordinary, blasted by an often ferocious ocean and backed closely by deep green mountain peaks.

Ferries are a way of life in the west. These reliable workhorses make navigating the insane geography possible but are also an enjoyable part of your journey, offering staggering, otherwise inaccessible, panoramas.

This is great hiking country, whether wild walking, following one of the many signed trails or lumbering along in a guided glacier-walking group. And if, after so much fresh air, you crave some small-town sophistication, the bijou art nouveau settlement of Ålesund has that in spades.

When to Go

Ålesund



Early Jul Norsk Fjellfestival in stunning Åndalsnes, a folk and outdoor celebration.

Mid-Jul Molde parties all week long during Moldejazz.

Late Aug Savour Ålesund's seafood haul during the town's Norwegian Food Festival.

The Western Fjords Highlights

- 1 Cruise between Geiranger and Hellesylt in the embrace of the towering cliffs of **Geirangerfjord** (p236).
- 2 Ride the dramatic **Flåmsbana railway** (p210) between wild Hardangervidda and Flåm.
- 3 Take the other-worldly **Trollstigen road** (p232) between Andalsnes and Valldal.
- 4 Get your boots damp on a tiny icy tongue of the vast **Jostedalsgreen icecap** (p222).
- 5 Immerse yourself in the Jugendstil era in architecturally unique **Ålesund** (p240).

