

Norway

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Hos Thea (p295)
- ➔ Lysverket (p315)
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- ➔ Gapahuken (p357)
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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ The Thief (p295)
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- ➔ Engholm Husky Design Lodge (p358)

Why Go?

Norway is a must-go-once-in-a-lifetime destination and the essence of its appeal is remarkably simple: this is one of the most beautiful countries on earth.

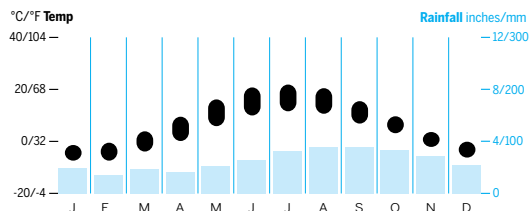
The drama of Norway's natural world is difficult to overstate. Impossibly steep-sided fjords cut deep gashes into the interior. But this is also a land of glaciers, grand and glorious, snaking down from Europe's largest ice fields, and of the primeval appeal of the Arctic.

The counterpoint to so much natural beauty is found in the country's vibrant cultural life. Norwegian cities are cosmopolitan and brimful of architecture that showcases the famous Scandinavian flair for design. At the same time, a busy calendar of festivals, many of international renown, are worth planning your trip around.

Yes, Norway is one of the most expensive countries on earth. But Norway will pay you back with never-to-be-forgotten experiences many times over.

When to Go

Oslo



Mid-Jun–mid-Aug
Summer fjords, endless days and accommodation prices fall.

Dec–Feb The aurora borealis (northern lights) and wonderful winter activities.

May–mid-Jun & mid-Aug–Sep
Generally fine weather and without the crowds.

Connections

Trains and buses link Norway with Russia, Sweden and Finland. Frequent ferries head to Germany and Denmark from several Norwegian ports. Airports in Oslo and Bergen connect Norway to the world, with a handful of international flights to Stavanger, Trondheim and distant Tromsø, way up in the Arctic Circle.

ITINERARIES

One Week

Spend a day in Oslo, then take the Norway in a Nutshell tour to Bergen via Myrdal, Flåm and Nærøfjorden. Spend two nights in Bergen before taking an unhurried jaunt around Hardangerfjord. Return to Sognefjord, stay at the Stalheim Hotel and visit glaciers around Fjærland. Return to Oslo.

Two Weeks

Instead of returning to Oslo, head back to Bergen and take the Hurtigruten along the coast, pausing for stays of a night or two in Ålesund and Trondheim, before continuing to the fishing villages of craggy Lofoten, where you should spend at least a couple of days exploring. Finally, take the Hurtigruten to Tromsø, the north's most vibrant city, before returning to Oslo.

Essential Food & Drink

- ➔ **Reindeer** Grilled or roasted, Scandinavia's iconic species is also its tastiest red meat; you'll find it on menus from Oslo to Svalbard.
- ➔ **Elk** Call it what you like (many prefer moose), but this tasty meat appears usually as steaks or burgers.
- ➔ **Salmon** World-renowned Norwegian salmon is so popular that you'll eat it for dinner (grilled) or breakfast (smoked).
- ➔ **Arctic char** The world's northernmost freshwater fish is a star of northern Norway's seafood-rich menus.
- ➔ **Arctic menu** A popular scheme (www.arktiskmeny.no) in northern Norway that encourages restaurants to use natural local ingredients.
- ➔ **Fish markets** Often the best (and cheapest) places to eat along the Norwegian coast, with the freshest seafood at fresh-off-the-boat prices.

AT A GLANCE

Capital Oslo
Area 385,186 sq km
Population 5.15 million
Country code ☎ 4
Language Norwegian
Currency kroner (Nkr)

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	Nkr5.49
Canada	C\$1	Nkr5.45
Euro	€1	Nkr8.15
Zone		
Japan	¥100	Nkr5.88
New Zealand	NZ\$1	Nkr5.09
UK	UK£1	Nkr10.04
USA	US\$1	Nkr5.95

Set Your Budget

Budget hotel room up to Nkr750
Two-course evening meal Nkr400–Nkr500
Museum entrance free–Nkr120
Beer Nkr60–Nkr100
Oslo bus or tram ticket Nkr30–Nkr50

Resources

Fjord Norway (www.fjordnorway.com)
LonelyPlanet.com (www.lonelyplanet.com/norway)
Visit Norway (www.visitnorway.com)
Northern Norway (www.nordnorge.com)
Svalbard (www.svalbard.net)