

# BEST OF NORWAY : SOUTHERNS FJORDS AND NORTHERNS ARCHIPELAGO

## Best of Norway

The greatest sights of Norway awaits you! This in-deep adventure will make you discover Norway will make you discover this land of contrast without making concessions to the main sites of this magnificent country.

We will start with the famous city of Bergen and its no less famous Hanseatic district. By boat, we will go up the longest fjord in the world, the Sognefjord to the town of Flam. And it is by the famous Myrdal cog train, then the Bergen Express that we will reach Oslo, with a stop on the Norwegian highlands at the foot of the Hardanger-Jøkulen glacier (1,863m), in a real Norwegian refuge.

After taking the time to discover the capital, its museums, its waterfront and its art of living, it is again by train that we will travel up North through the whole country to the arctic circle with a luxury stopover in Trondheim, a beautiful city in central Norway. After a night in a sleeper train as every exploration should have, we arrive at the Lofoten Islands. Just a stone's throw from the mainland, they raise superb tapered peaks falling right into the sea. We explore the archipelago and the Lofotodden National Park for 3 days taking the time for beautiful walks and cultural visits between mountains, sea and small fishing villages. Then we will finally start the famous road trip that will allow us to cross the most beautiful archipelagos of Norway : the Lofoten Islands. It is without any doubt the most beautiful natural jewel of Norway, the Vesterålen Islands where many cetaceans find refuge and finally the island of Senja which has remained secret. On the way on this classified road through the northern archipelagos, we will visit an aquaculture farm, then go on a sea trip to enjoy whale watching. Our journey ends in the superb city of Tromsø, the port of entry of the Arctic and the Sami territories that we will take the time to visit before returning with our heads full of memories!

 Region	South Norway
 Activity	The Lofoten Islands
 Duration	Hiking
 Group	Summer
 Code	15 days
 Price	4 to 15 people
 Level	ENORSVA
 Comfort	From €3,095
 Language(s)	1/5
	3/5
	English / French

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 Flight to Bergen

Flight to Bergen, the gateway to the great fjords and glaciers. Afternoon and evening at leisure to visit the city.

*Accommodation: Hotel*

*Evening meal not included*

### Day 2 Bergen



Visit Bergen city. The Bergen-Pass (25 €) enables you to visit most of the museums and attractions free of charge and to use the public transport. Not to be missed, are the memorable fish market and shrimp sandwiches, the colourful hanseatic district, a selection of Bergens many museums and the views of Ulriken ... You will also have the possibility to visit the classical fairytale stave church, Fantoft. If you are feeling adventurous you can climb to the top of Ulriken Mountain and enjoy exceptional views - a busy day awaits !

*Accommodation: Guesthouse*

*Evening meal not included*

### Day 3 Sognefjord boat ride - Aurlandsdalen Valley - Finse



Today is the day we take a boat trip through Sognefjord, the largest fjord in the world. We travel up this incredible fjord from Bergen to Flåm. We then explore the spectacular Aurlandsdalen Valley thanks to a short journey on the Flåmsbana railway line, the steepest railway in the world. Next it is a 45 minute journey on the Bergen Express to Finse, a small village at 1222m above sea level. This rural settlement has no roads, it is only accessible by foot, bike or train. Tonight we have the chance to stay in a comfortable shelter here managed by the DNT, the Norwegian Trekking Association. This unique experience bring us into the heart of Norwegian culture and emphasises the strong link between Norwegians and their nature.

*Accommodation: Refuge*

*Boat trip and train journeys*

### Day 4 Hardangerjøkulen

A day devoted to Hardanger Glacier and glacial landscapes full of lakes and streams. In order to fully comprehend this incredible nature and the edge of the world atmosphere, we spend a second night in a DNT mountain refuge, this time at the foot of Hardangerjøkulen, the Hardanger Glacier.

*4 hours of hiking*

*Elevation: +/- 460 m*

*Accommodation: Refuge*

### Day 5 Finse - Oslo

Today a fantastic journey on the Bergen Railway to Oslo awaits. Afternoon and evening at leisure to explore the Norwegian capital.

*Accommodation: Hotel*

*Evening meal not included*

📍 **Day 6 Oslo and Oslomarka**



Today you can spend the full day at leisure exploring the Norwegian capital which sits spread over many islands and scattered across Oslofjord. As in Bergen, the Oslo Pass (25 EUR) enables you to enjoy all of the cultural and festive attractions of the city as well as free transport. From the Munich, Popular Culture, Fram and Kon-tiki museums to Vigeland Park and Oslo Marka there is no shortage of interesting things to discover...

For those who wish to enjoy a final day in the nature rather than in Oslo, your guide invites you to go hiking in Oslomarka. A walk in the majestic natural area which surrounds Oslo can be a perfect way to end your stay...

*Lunch and dinner not included*

*Accommodation: Hotel*

*Optional 4 hours of hiking*

*Elevation: +/- 320 m*

📍 **Day 7 Train journey to the charming town of Trondheim**

Free morning to complete your discovery of Oslo and possibly buy some souvenirs.

At the beginning of the afternoon, we embark by train for a South - North journey, since we will reach the Lofoten Islands by this way in two stages. Thus we will become aware of the vastness of the country and better appreciate the variety of landscapes.

We carry out the first part of this route this afternoon, crossing the bucolic Norwegian countryside, to the charming town of Trondheim where we stop for the night.

*Accommodation : hotel*

📍 **Day 8 Trondheim tour and night train to Lofoten**

We have a full day to discover, once again, one of the prettiest cities in Norway.

More private than Bergen and Oslo, Trondheim nevertheless remains a dynamic city, since it is the third city of Norway in terms of population.

Firmly turned towards the sea, this city has a charming port, surrounded by small colorful stalls. Many small cobbled streets adorn the city center, as well as several bridges to cross the many rivers crisscrossing the locality.

Trondheim is also recognized for its culinary culture, which we will discover during dinner at the restaurant this evening.

After enjoying a good dinner, we board the train again, the nordlandsbanen, and settle in comfortable berths to spend the night.

Tonight, while we are dreaming, we will cross the polar circle ...

*Accommodation : night train*

📍 **Day 9 Villages of Å and Reine.**



On the southern part of Lofoten is Reine, the Lofoten's Venice. We will stop there and take advantage to capture some beautiful shots of the splendid Queenfjord.

The village of Å is situated at the end of this road. Here, we can visit its small museum of cod (optional, 5 euros). Further south, the island is accessible only by boat as the terrain is mountainous. Leaving the village, we head towards the seaside for a nice hike around Lake Å.

We then end the day with a visit to this typical fishing village before taking the ferry back to the mainland.

Evening meal at your own expenses in Bodø.

3 hours of hiking

Elevation: + / - 250 m

Accommodation: Rorbu / sjøhus

#### 📍 Day 10 Kvalvika Beach

Today we leave for a hike in the moor, to the heights of the small village of Fredvang. A regular ascent brings us to the summit of Torsfjordtinden from where we can have a breathtaking view of the famous Kvalvika Beach. The hike to this beach is arguably the most popular hike of the Lofoten Islands. The geometry of the beach, the color of the water and the black granite cliffs that surround it will not leave you indifferent to this beauty of nature. If you feel like it, you can walk down to the beach to feel the fine sand under your feet and eventually enjoy an invigorating swim in the ocean!

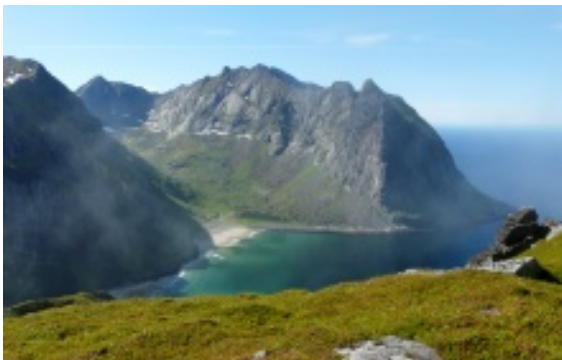
We then get back to the village of Fredvang and last night in Sjøhus.

3 hours of hiking

Elevation: + / - 300 m

Accommodation: Rorbu / sjøhus

#### 📍 Day 11 Viking Museum and visit of Nusfjord



Today, you can visit the Viking Museum of Borg, a real-size reconstruction of the house of a Viking chief who reigned in the Lofoten until 950 AD.

Through a guided tour, you will discover the way of life of these legendary people (optional). In the afternoon, you hike along the seaside of Norway, along the coast that connects Aukland to Uttakleiv. It is possible that these two beaches could make you forget the latitude where we are and might even invite you to swim.

At the end of the day, we stop by the village of Nusfjord to discover the typical houses, traditional fishermen huts of the region strategically installed on the harbour.

We then settle for two nights in the southern Lofoten.

100 kms of minivan

2 hours of hiking

Elevation: + / - 150m

Accommodation: Rorbu / sjøhus

#### 📍 Day 12 To the Vesterålen and the Lofoten Islands

We continue our crossing of the Vesterålen, by road and by sea through the classified Kaiser route, cutting between fjords and mountains. We will stop at Sortland, the cradle of Norwegian salmon farming. As an option, we can visit an aquaculture farm, which will allow you to discover, in a unique way, the salmon production in Norway. At the end of the day, we enter the mythical Lofoten Islands and settle in our accommodation for the night in Svolvær in Lofoten.

210 kms of minivan

Accommodation: Chalet

#### 📍 Day 13 Andenes

Today you have an optional visit (costing 100 euros) to the cetaceans center and a day trip out to the sea with scientists. This is a special opportunity to observe, with a very great chance of success, the famous humpback whales, sperm whales, pilot whales, minke whales, Orcas and Dolphins that are largely found in this part of the Norwegian Sea. Today, get ready for an unforgettable and magical day.

We have the opportunity to finish the day with a beautiful hike to the heights of Bleik. Its sandy beach gives us a beautiful glimpse of the wild nature of the Vesterålen Islands.

You will spend the night in the same accommodation in Andenes.

\* For the departures in September the hike of the Husfjellet on Senja will be proposed instead of the Safari Whale in Andenes.

Accommodation: Rorbu / sjøhus

3 hours of hiking

Elevation: + / - 360 m

Accommodation: Rorbu / sjøhus

#### 📍 Day 14    **Senja Island - Tromsø**



A ferry takes us toward Senja Island (crossing 1h40 approximately), a little Norway in itself, divided by fjords in the north and hilly by the peat bogs to the south, this island is a real gem of wilderness and is well preserved. Enjoy the hike to the heights of Hamn to enjoy the bird's eye view of these fjords and the chain of islets that make up the archipelago).

Then we drive to Tromsø where we arrive in the beginning of the afternoon. Located at over 69 ° North, Tromsø is one of the northernmost cities in the world, nestled in mountains and forests, surrounded by fjords and glaciers. The city center of Tromsø is dynamic, warm and friendly that hides behind the harsh climate.

Depending on your arrival time, you can discover some great museums such as the Polar Museum tracing the history of trappers, a cable car that takes you to a stunning view over the city, a magnificent cathedral where concerts are held daily, and its own brewery.

250 kms of minivan

2 hours of hiking

Elevation: + 290m / - 290 m

Accommodation: Rorbu / sjøhus

#### 📍 Day 15    **End of the trip**

Transfert to the airport.

## DATES & PRICES

### ***International departures:***

*No departure for now*

### ***Departures for French-speaking groups:***

*No departure for now*

**Trip code: ENORSVA**

### ***Included***

- All in-country transfers as detailed in itinerary
- Accommodation - refuge / rorbu / hotel
- Full board except for meals in Tromsø, Trondheim, Bergen and Oslo
- Luggage transfers
- Accompaniment by a professional Altai guide

### ***Not included***

- International flights
- Tips, drinks and personal expenses

### ***Notes***

#### ***Explanation of difficulty level:***

#### **LEVEL 1 Very easy**

Pace: Quiet

Daily Walking Time: 1 to 4 hours

Daily Elevation: 300 m

Preparation: No specific training required

Experience Accessible to anyone in good physical health

You like to discover by taking your time. You alternate visits and short walks half-day on easy terrain without significant elevation. You prefer hard and comfortable accommodation without being luxurious.

### ***Terms and conditions***

#### ***Booking conditions***

Booking a trip with Altai Norway implies acceptance of the terms and conditions of sale. Each customer is required to complete a registration form and, subject to availability at the time of registration, travellers are expected to pay a deposit of 35% of the total price to complete their booking. Payments can be made online or by bank transfer. You will receive an e-mail with your booking confirmation.

#### ***Invoice procedure***

Once your booking is confirmed you will receive an invoice by e-mail. The full balance of the trip must be received at least 35 days before your departure date. We reserve the right to cancel your booking, free of charge, if this deadline is not respected.

#### ***Cancellation policy***

If for any reason you have to cancel your trip, we require written confirmation of your decision. The money you have paid will then be refunded according to the following deductions:

- Cancellation received more than 30 days prior to the departure date: a sum of €50 per person will be retained
- Cancellation received 30 to 21 days before the departure date: your deposit, 30% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 20 to 14 days before the departure date: 50% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 13 to 7 days before the departure date: 75% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received less than 7 days before the departure date: 100% of the total trip price will be retained



**Special cases:**

Please note that, regardless of the date of cancellation or modification if you have agreed to pay for services such as hotel reservations, flights or additional activities, these services are usually non-refundable so additional fees may apply.

Fixed airfares: if your airline ticket was issued in advance, often done to avoid significant surcharges, you will be charged 100% of any non-refundable fees if you wish to change or cancel your flight plan.

Fixed in-country costs: early charges for firm bookings will be charged if you cancel or modify your trip. Insurance costs: if you have taken out comprehensive or cancellation insurance, the cost of insurance is due and cannot be refunded.

**Please note that fees apply according to the date we receive your cancellation or modification request in writing.**

If we have to cancel a departure due to an insufficient number of participants, you will be informed no later than 21 days before departure and a full refund will be issued, you will not be entitled to further compensation. We reserve the rights to cancel departures due to exceptional circumstances which may impact the safety of participants. Such circumstances include those amounting to 'force majeure' in which case participants will receive a full refund but they will not be entitled to any compensation.

***Changes to travel contract***

If you wish to make a change to your booking please contact Altaï Norway in writing; you will be expected to pay any fee which might arise from this change. In the event of unforeseen external events, Altaï Norway may change some aspects of the travel contract. If any changes are necessary you will be informed as quickly as possible.

***Pricing***

The prices on our website are updated regularly and all of the prices we advertise are accurate when published. We reserve the rights to make changes to any of these prices. Before you make a booking we will give you the up-to-date price of your chosen holiday including any supplements, upgrades or additional activities you may have requested. If the number of travellers is fewer than the indicated number of participants on the website, a small group surcharge may be applied. For all of our trips we include details of services, prices and what is/is not included but please be aware that changes to the prices may be necessary in accordance with exchange rates or price changes of various components of the journey.

***Contract transfer***

If you are unable to travel for any reason, you can transfer your booking to another person in which case our modification conditions apply. Both the transferor and transferee will be jointly and severally liable for payment of the total holiday price and other associated expenses. Some airline carriers treat name changes as cancellations and you may be required to pay for the cost of a new ticket.

***Insurance***

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We strongly recommend that you take out personal travel insurance for your trip with Altaï Norway as soon as your booking is confirmed. We advise you to purchase a travel insurance policy which covers flight cancellations, luggage loss and emergency health care. Please look carefully at which activities are covered by your insurer and do not forget to bring all necessary documents and information with you (name of the company, name of the contract, insurance policy number, telephone number...)

## PRACTICAL INFO

### **Staff**

You will be accompanied by an expert Altai Guide throughout your stay. Armed with an abundance of experience and a wealth of expert knowledge our professional team know their country inside out. Our qualified guides are all English-speaking, all practicing outdoor practitioners and all incredibly passionate about Norway, the country they live in for a large chunk of each year.

### **Food**

We are proud of the fresh and frankly delicious food we provide despite latitudes of 68° North.

Each day begins with a hearty breakfast with plenty of tea and coffee. Each morning, you and your guide will prepare a picnic lunch for the day featuring local foods: sandwiches, salads, fruits, cakes and dried fruits ...

Evening meals are prepared together with your guide based on available local products. During your stay, you will have the opportunity to taste grilled or smoked salmon (laks), water-cooked and fresh shrimp (reker/ferske reker) and cod (torsk).

### **Drinks**

Do not forget that alcohol and cigarettes are heavily taxed and expensive in Scandinavia. If you wish to enjoy an aperitif with your group in the evenings we recommend purchasing duty-free products at the airport.

### **Accommodation**

#### **In Cities**

We sleep in a hotel accommodation in twins rooms.

#### **In the Lofoten Islands**

We stay in Søjhus or Rorbu accommodation, comfortable traditional houses used by fishermen from January to April. Rooms are shared between 4 to 6 people. Please note that in the wilder regions of Norway, accommodation is scarce and often small meaning that the level of comfort and equipment of each cottages remains variable. All lodgings have the following elements: heating, hot showers, toilets, common dining room and equipped kitchen. When showers are not free, you will receive one token per day per person to shower.

#### **In Refuges**

This adventure includes 2 nights in charming refuges owned by the DNT, the Norwegian Trekking Association.

Please bring a sleeping bag or sleeping bag liner.

### **Transportation**

This trip includes minibus and ferry transportation

### **Budget & exchange**

#### **The currency is the Norwegian Krone (kr)**

Visit <http://www.xe.com> for the latest currency converter and exchange rates.

You can withdraw the local currency from in-country ATMs and payment by card is widely accepted. Please budget for meals and transport as necessary, drinks, tips, museum entry fees and other personal expenses.

### **Tips**

Although the custom is not widespread here, if you are satisfied with the services of your guide and local team, tipping is always appreciated - it is not obligatory and should be left to the discretion of each individual.

### **Vital equipment**

- A sleeping liner is recommended for nights in rorbus
- Sunglasses (high quality protection)
- A wind and waterproof jacket (breathable, sealed seams)
- Suitable underwear, t-shirts and walking trousers



- Hiking boots (high-rise, sturdy soles)
- Warm jumper(s) and jacket(s)
- Your swim stuff
- Sun cream
- A headtorch and spare batteries
- Warm thick socks
- Gloves
- A warm hat
- Any personal medication
- Pyjamas
- Towel & toiletries
- A thermos/suitable water bottle(s)

## **Material**

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We prefer that you do not wear cotton clothing, including underwear, when participating in activities. When cotton gets wet from water or sweat it ceases to insulate and it does not dry fast. The best materials for outdoor activities are fast drying materials like polyester or materials which are warm when wet like wool. The most powerful materials against the wind and rain are 'breathable' materials like Gore-Tex or Nikwax.

Our advice for keeping warm

Winter in Norway can be very cold, please think carefully about what clothes you bring, although we will provide warm outer layers, the layers you wear next to your skin make the biggest difference. We recommend:

- No cotton
- Bring dry spares of everything, even underwear and gloves
- Wear multiple layers including:
  1. A warm breathable base layer
  2. A second thermal layer
  3. Wind and waterproof protective out layer (we provide an additional quality jacket and over trousers).

## **Helpful equipment**

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You may also consider packing

- A pair of comfortable shoes for evenings in towns
- Waterproof trousers
- Walking poles
- Tupperware and cutlery for picnics
- Extra layers
- Wetwipes
- Blister plasters
- A suitable camera
- Plastic bags for wet/dirty clothing
- Tissues
- Toilet paper & a lighter

## **Luggage**

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Please bring a **small rucksack** to use as a day bag. You can bring this as hand luggage on the aeroplane. You will carry your lunch, water, spare layers and any personal medication with you each day in this bag. You will also need a **larger bag** to store your other clothes and belongings in, please ensure that this is a soft bag like a rucksack or holdall rather than a hard cased suitcase because it is more practical to transport. We recommend packing all of your clothes in plastic bags so that they stay dry in the event of wet weather.

## **Medicine**

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Your companion has a first-aid kit during the tour. However, we recommend that you bring your medications:

- Personal medication
- Anti pain medication Paracetamol

- Diarrhoea drugs
- Intestinal dressing
- Sun screen with strong protection for the lips and the skin
- Eye drops for the eyes
- Moisturizing cream for the treatment of superficial burns (blisters and sunburns)
- An adhesive elastic banda box of adhesive plasters and disinfectant compresses
- Double skin for blisters

## ***Passport***

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Most travellers require a passport that is valid for at least three months after the return date. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific passport requirements and please be aware that proof of onwards travel may be required. You can check your requirements on the website provided by the Norwegian government: [www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/persons-who-do-not-need-a-visa-to-visit-norway-/#link-709](http://www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/persons-who-do-not-need-a-visa-to-visit-norway-/#link-709)

## ***Visa***

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Most travellers of EU states do not need a VISA to visit Norway, as Norway is part of the Schengen agreement. This does not apply to travellers of other nations. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific visa requirements. You can check the following web site of the Norwegian government: [www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/persons-who-do-not-need-a-visa-to-visit-norway-/#link-709](http://www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/persons-who-do-not-need-a-visa-to-visit-norway-/#link-709)

## ***Mandatory vaccines***

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There are no specific health risks.

## ***Weather***

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In winter, the weather in Northern Norway is subject to frequent changes. This part of Norway, the Arctic Zone, benefits from a surprisingly pleasant micro climate. At a latitude of 68° North and 300km North of the Arctic Circle, summer here is relatively mild with average temperatures of around 14°C (57°F). However, it is humid and does rain regularly. Good quality (breathable with sealed seams) rain clothing, jacket and trousers are paramount.

Keep in mind this Norwegian proverb when packing: 'There is no bad weather, only bad clothing'

## ***Electricity***

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In Norway, the standard Europlug (Type C & F) with two round prongs is used and most of Scandinavia uses 220 volts.

## ***Local time***

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Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)/ Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) +1. Daylight Savings Time (DST) is observed.

## ***Sustainable tourism***

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As adventure and wilderness travel experts who run trips to some of the most remote parts of the world, we take responsible tourism very seriously.

We respect the 'Leave No Trace' outdoor ethical code and try to explore this beautiful location whilst causing minimal environmental damage.

The Leave No Trace policy can be summarized in 7 simple steps which we hope you will follow during our trip...

1. Be prepared
2. Stick to trails and camp overnight right
3. Stash your trash and pick up waste
4. Leave it as you find it
5. Be careful with fire
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors

Over the years we have built up good relations with our local suppliers and we are keen to support local businesses as much as possible. We are a small company and we pay our local partners and suppliers directly insuring fair rates.

Our small group sizes not only provide a more intimate adventure but also cause less impact on the environment and local communities.

We expect all who travel with us to support and uphold our Sustainable Tourism philosophies.

If you have any questions regarding how to be a responsible traveller or concerning any other subject, please do not hesitate to contact us.