

EUROPE · MOUNTAINS · HIKING · ROAD TRIPS · WINTER SPORTS · ISLANDS

 Norway

Norway's fjords, glaciers and Arctic islands give it some of Europe's most dramatic scenery, from a boat on the Geirangerfjord to the jagged peaks of Lofoten rising straight from the sea. Summer brings near-endless daylight, winter the northern lights; prices are high year-round, so self-catering helps.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Norway and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 25 August 2026.

 CAPITAL Oslo	 CURRENCY Norwegian krone (NOK) £1 ≈ NOK 12.57	 LANGUAGE Norwegian, English Sami	 BEST TIME Feb–Mar, Jun–Aug
 DAILY BUDGET £75–£330 £££ Expensive	 PLUGS Type C, F 230V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 2h direct ~£60–£220 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+1 standard time

Norway runs roughly 1,750km from its southern tip to North Cape, so a first trip usually picks either the fjords or the Arctic. The classic summer route links Oslo and Bergen on the scenic Bergen Railway, detours via Flåm and the Nærøfjord, and continues north to Geiranger and the Atlantic Road, with Preikestolen near Stavanger to the south. The Arctic north — Lofoten, Senja, Tromsø and North Cape — is reached by plane or the coastal ships of Hurtigruten and Havila. Winter trips focus on Tromsø, Alta and Lofoten for the aurora, dog-sledding and, around Tromsø, whale-watching.

Norway is expensive — restaurant meals and alcohol cost well above UK prices — but much of the best is free: the right to roam (allemannsretten) lets you hike and wild-camp on most uncultivated land, and the views from trails and fjord-side roads cost nothing. Infrastructure is superb, from long road tunnels and car ferries to the DNT trekking association's marked trails and mountain huts. Summer brings crowds and cruise ships to Geiranger and Flåm, so arrive early or late in the day. It suits hikers, road-trippers and rail fans, and visitors are often surprised by how changeable mountain weather is and how light June nights stay.

Top 5 highlights

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NATURE

Geirangerfjord

This UNESCO-listed fjord winds 15km between sheer walls streaked with waterfalls, including the Seven Sisters. Take the ferry between Hellesylt and Geiranger, then drive the hairpins of Ørnesvingen or up to Dalsnibba for the view down.
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NATURE

Lofoten Islands

Granite peaks rise straight from the sea above red fishermen's cabins (rorbuer) and white beaches. Hike Reinebringen or Ryten, kayak, cycle the E10, or come in winter for northern lights and the cod-drying racks of the skrei season.

3

ADVENTURE

Preikestolen

The flat-topped 604m cliff known as Pulpit Rock juts over the Lysefjord. The 8km return hike from the trailhead at Preikestolen Fjellstue takes four hours or so; start early in summer, or join a guided sunrise or winter hike.

4

NATURE

Flåm Railway and the Nærøfjord

The Flåm Railway drops 863m in 20km from Myrdal to the fjord, one of the world's steepest standard-gauge lines. Continue by boat through the narrow, UNESCO-listed Nærøfjord to Gudvangen on the classic 'Norway in a Nutshell' route.

5

NATURE

Northern lights in Tromsø

Sitting about 350km inside the Arctic Circle, Tromsø is Norway's best-connected base for aurora-chasing between September and March. Tours drive inland to escape cloud; add dog-sledding, Sami culture and, from November to January, whale-watching.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Oslo

≈ 1.1 million people

A compact, walkable capital at the head of its fjord: walk on the Opera House roof, see Munch and Vigeland's sculpture park, and take a ferry to the fjord islands.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Bergen

≈ 270,000 people

Gateway to the western fjords, with the UNESCO-listed Hanseatic wharf of Bryggen, a fish market and the Fløibanen funicular; pack a waterproof, as it is among Europe's rainiest cities.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Stavanger

≈ 230,000 people

An oil-boom city with a pretty old town of white wooden houses and a petroleum museum; most visitors come for the Lysefjord, Preikestolen and Kjerag.

Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

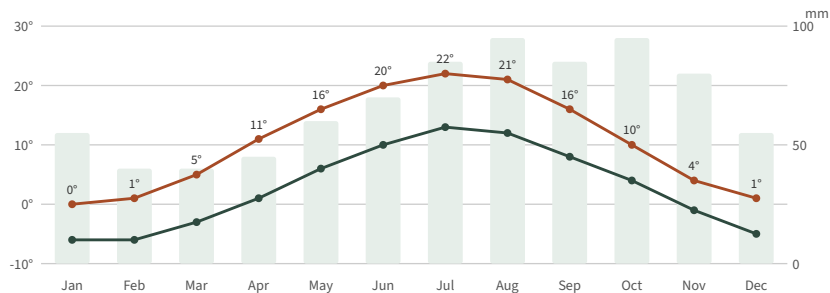
When to go to Norway

Best time: **Feb–Mar, Jun–Aug.**



Average climate in Oslo

— High °C
 — Low °C
 ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Mar–Apr	Sami Easter Festival Around Easter, the Sami town of Kautokeino in Finnmark hosts reindeer racing, the Sámi Grand Prix joik and song contest, and concerts under the spring light.
May	Constitution Day (17 May) Norway's national day brings children's parades, brass bands and national costumes (bunad) to every town; in Oslo the royal family waves from the palace balcony.
Jun	Sankthansaften (Midsummer Eve) On 23 June Norwegians light bonfires along fjords and beaches to celebrate the longest days, with barbecues and gatherings stretching through the light night.

How much does Norway cost?

SHOESTRING £75 per person / day ≈ NOK 942 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £170 per person / day ≈ NOK 2,136 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £330 per person / day ≈ NOK 4,147 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Fårikål Voted Norway's national dish: mutton and cabbage layered in a pot with whole black peppercorns and stewed slowly, eaten with boiled potatoes, especially in autumn.	Brunost Caramel-coloured, slightly sweet 'brown cheese' made from boiled whey, sliced thin with a cheese plane onto bread or warm waffles.	Skrei Migrating Arctic cod caught off Lofoten and the north coast from January to April, prized for firm white flesh and often served with liver and roe.
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Getting around

Trains from Oslo reach Bergen, Trondheim, Stavanger and Bodø, with the Bergen and Rauma lines among Europe's most scenic. North of Bodø, apart from Narvik's line into Sweden, there is no railway, so the north relies on SAS, Norwegian and Widerøe flights, express buses and the Hurtigruten and Havila coastal ships. Car hire suits the fjords; budget for tolls and frequent car ferries. Uber works in Oslo.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE C F 230V — bring a UK-to-C/F adapter	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Fire: 110 Police: 112 Ambulance: 113 Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +47	TIME ZONE UTC+1 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Generally safe to drink

DRIVING

On the right

TIPPING

Service is included and tipping is not expected; rounding up or adding around 10% for excellent restaurant service is a kind gesture, not an obligation.

ETIQUETTE

Norwegians value punctuality, personal space and quiet on public transport. Take shoes off in homes and cabins, leave no trace when using the right to roam, and keep mountain huts tidy.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Oslo Airport, Gardermoen (OSL), Oslo; Bergen Airport, Flesland (BGO), Bergen; Tromsø Airport (TOS), Tromsø

Visas & entry for Norway

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can travel without a visa to the Schengen area, which includes Norway, for up to 90 days in any 180-day period. This applies if you travel: as a tourist; to visit family or friends; to attend business meetings, cultural or sports events; for short-term studies or training.

The requirements for working in Norway are different.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Bat Lyssavirus

Tick-borne encephalitis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Norway

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Fri 25 Dec 2026

Christmas Day

Sat 26 Dec 2026	Second Day of Christmas
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Thu 25 Mar 2027	Maundy Thursday
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Sun 28 Mar 2027	Easter Sunday
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Sat 1 May 2027	Labour Day
Thu 6 May 2027	Ascension Day
Sun 16 May 2027	Pentecost
Mon 17 May 2027	Constitution Day · Pentecost Monday

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Norwegian

ENGLISH	NORWEGIAN	SAY IT
Hello	Hei	hi
Thank you	Takk	tahk
Please	Vær så snill	vair saw SNILL
Excuse me	Unnskyld	OON-shill
How much is this?	Hva koster dette?	vah KOSS-ter DET-teh?

Know before you go

- Restaurants are pricey, so many visitors self-cater: supermarket delis, bakeries and hostel kitchens keep costs down, and a packed lunch (matpakke) is a Norwegian institution.
- Wine, spirits and strong beer are sold only at state Vinmonopolet shops; supermarkets usually stop selling beer at 8pm on weekdays and 6pm on Saturdays, with none on Sundays.
- Check yr.no before any hike: mountain weather turns fast, even in summer. Popular hikes like Trolltunga are long and serious, so start early and carry layers.