

Norway ~ Walking in the Fjords, with the Bergen Festival and Opera in Oslo

<http://www.kudutravel.com/tours/norway-walking-tour>

30 May – 6 June 2020

Pristine and stunningly beautiful, this is nature at its unadulterated best, with ancient Viking settlements, cascading waterfalls, soaring fells and magnificent glaciers. The fjords of Western Norway offer some of the most breathtaking backdrops for a holiday anywhere on earth.

We begin our journey in the Hanseatic town of Bergen and attend a concert of the Bergen International Festival. Sailing deep into Hardanger Fjord, we base ourselves in the hamlet of Utne for walking in this spectacularly beautiful area. Staying in three special historic hotels, our trip is accompanied by 'New Nordic' cuisine, based on the freshest of seasonal Scandinavian ingredients.

We embark on one of *the* great rail journeys, travelling across the roof of Norway to Oslo, where we explore museums and galleries before attending a performance of **Bizet's opera 'Carmen'** at the acclaimed Oslo Opera.

HIGHLIGHTS of our Norway walking tour include:

- Walks in magnificent scenery in Bergen and Hardanger fjords
- A concert at the Bergen International Festival and Bizet's opera 'Carmen' in Oslo
- Exploring mediaeval Bergen and Oslo on foot and sampling delicious New Nordic cuisine
- Travelling by boat in the fjords and across the roof of Norway on the famous Flåm railway
- Special 4-star hotels, including a member of the 'Historic Hotels of Norway'

Guests' comments on this trip:

'Very enjoyable trip with good company (I liked the mix of Brits and Americans) to an area where there are not a lot of trips. Transportation was a highlight...ferries and trains are always fun... and the seafood was a close second.'

'I enjoyed the variety of travel, especially the train and ferries. The food was good - it was asparagus and rhubarb season - I didn't know rhubarb could be prepared so many ways!'

Itinerary

DAY 1

D included

After meeting at Bergen airport in the early afternoon, a short private transfer takes us to the waterfront of Old Bryggen, where we check into our 4-star hotel, a converted 15th century Hanseatic merchant's house. We have an introductory walk around the historic wooden harbour district, founded by King Olav the Peaceful in 1070. Dinner tonight is in a famous local fish restaurant.

DAY 2

B, L, D included

In the 19th century, Bergen was Europe's largest wooden city, with busy, steep and densely built-up streets, squares and alleyways giving it a unique character. Visiting Old Bergen, a reconstructed town of around 50 wooden houses, gives us an idyllic reminder of Bergen at

this time. After lunch, the historic Floibanen Funicular carries us 300 metres above the city, revealing spectacular views of the fjords and city below. From here, a gentle 2-hour hike takes us past several small lakes and through stands of Arctic birch to a viewpoint over the fjords. After an early dinner, we attend a concert of the Bergen International Festival in the beautiful setting of the 13th century Håkonshallen, built for the wedding and coronation of King Magnus Lagabøte in 1261.

DAY 3

B, L, D included

Strolling along wharves backed by picturesque old timber and stone buildings, we reach the Hanseatic Meeting House. This well-preserved early 18th century wooden house tells the fascinating tale of how German merchants lived and worked for more than two centuries, trading in stockfish and grain. We visit Bergen's oldest church, the 12th century Romanesque-Gothic Mariakirken. The centuries old, yet still bustling, fish market provides the perfect setting for an impromptu picnic. We travel by coach outside Bergen to Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg's home and now museum, *Troldhaugen*. We visit the villa, the museum and the small hut where Grieg retreated to compose and hear a piano recital of Grieg's music.

DAY 4

B, L, D included

An early departure takes us on a 90-minute drive through the mountains to Nordheimsund on the famous Hardanger Fjord. We catch the post boat and sail for an hour up the Fjord, disembarking at the tiny hamlet of Utne. Our home for the next two nights is Norway's oldest hotel, operating since 1722 and a member, naturally, of the 'Historic Hotels of Norway'. After a light lunch, we set off on a walk with wonderful views over the Sør fjord. Passing through apple orchards, for which the region is famous, our stroll ends at the Hardanger Folk Museum, complete with old farm buildings, displays of folk costumes and fine examples of the traditional Hardanger fiddle, the instrument so loved by Edvard Grieg. Dinner tonight is in the excellent hotel restaurant, decorated with painted wooden furniture.

DAY 5

B, L, D included

A boat takes us into the narrow Sør fjord, dominated by the Folgefonna glacier to the south. We disembark at the small settlement of Kinsarvik, once a Viking marketplace. Setting off on foot, we walk gradually up the forested Husedalen Valley, following a riverside path and accompanied by birdsong and the roar of the waters. We enjoy a local lunch, then return by ferry to our charming hotel in Utne. We discover the region's cider making heritage at an informal tasting before dinner.

DAY 6

B, L, D included

Crossing the unforgettable Hardanger fjord for the final time by ferry, private transport takes us on a scenic drive to board the famous Flåm railway line, which in forty breathtaking minutes winds its way past waterfalls, over bridges and across gorges - one of the world's most spectacular rail journeys. From Myrdal at over 2,800 feet, we travel 'Across the Roof of Norway' on the *Bergens Banen* train to Oslo, arriving in the early evening. A private transfer brings us to our 4-star historic hotel, ideally situated in the centre.

DAY 7

B, L, D included

The day begins with a ferry ride across Oslo harbour to visit the fascinating Viking Ships Museum, plus the special museums dedicated to Thor Heyerdahl's raft, Kon Tiki, and Roald Amundsen's ship Fram, which took him to the South Pole in 1912. Dinner is in the strikingly

designed new Opera House, with wonderful harbour views, after the highlight of the evening, a performance of **Bizet's opera 'Carmen'**.

DAY 8

B included

The morning is free for exploring Oslo, perhaps visiting the 17th century Cathedral, the Nobel Peace Prize Centre, or taking a ferry to visit the Norwegian Folk Museum. Our visit to Norway concludes with an afternoon transfer to Oslo airport.

Activity Level

Relaxed

3 country walking days, 2 – 3 hours daily on good paths, though can be muddy or stony underfoot. Town walking days have cobblestones and uneven pavements, plus steps on and off trains, trams and boats. Comfortable waterproof footwear, preferably with ankle support, is essential.

Temperatures

The weather in Norway in late May/early June is normally pleasant, with temperatures ranging between 14° and 18°C during the day.

Accommodation

- 3 nights in Bergen, in a 4-star hotel, a beautifully converted 15C Hanseatic merchant's house
- 2 nights in Utne, in an antique-filled hotel, a member of the Historic Hotels of Norway
- 2 nights in Oslo, in a 4-star historic hotel within walking distance of the opera house and waterfront

Trip Price, per person sharing

£3,690.75 until 29th August 2019

£3,890.25 until 29th February 2020

<https://www.kudutravel.com/faq#discounts>

£3,790.50 until 29th November 2019

£3,990 after 29th February 2020

£680 single supplement

£600 deposit per person

Please note that the single room supplement is imposed by the hotels and not by Kudu Travel. If you are willing to share, but no other suitable guest books on the trip, we regret that the supplement will be payable. We shall endeavour to obtain double rooms for single occupancy, whenever possible.

PLEASE NOTE THAT **EARLY BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL** FOR MUSIC AND OPERA TRIPS.

Kudu Travel reserves a block of seats for each performance, approximately 1 year in advance, and unsold seats will eventually be released.

Be aware that it may not be possible to retrieve seats in the same category, or indeed, to obtain any tickets at all for sold out performances.

Price Includes

- all accommodation for Days 1 through 8, on a twin shared basis
- all meals, with soft drinks at lunch and beer or wine with dinners, other than those excepted in the daily notation
- all land and water transportation as described, except during free periods

- all entrance and sightseeing fees except during free periods
- top category tickets for the concert of the Bergen Festival and the opera performance in Oslo
- gratuities for hotel and restaurant staff and drivers (appreciation for the tour leader is entirely at your discretion)

Price does not Include

- flights to Bergen and from Oslo
- trip cancellation, medical or other insurance
- immunisations, prescriptions or other medical requirements
- passport, visa and health documentation
- personal expenses (laundry, alcohol other than with group dinners, free time activities)
- meals noted as excepted in the daily notation
- transport and transfer of excess baggage
- Norwegian departure tax, if any

VALUE FOR MONEY - SO MUCH IS INCLUDED

On Kudu trips, you will only need money for postcards, presents to take home, the odd G & T or an irresistible ice cream. Festival and opera tickets, museum and gallery entrances, National Park fees, all meals (with a very few exceptions specified in individual itineraries), wine with lunch and dinner, access to specialist books carried by the guides, gratuities for porters and hotel and restaurant staff, boat rides, train trips, internal flights, wine tastings, 4WDs with drivers, the services of skilled local guides and trackers etc. are ALL INCLUDED in the cost of your holiday.

We are confident that, like previous very satisfied guests, you will discover that our tours give you excellent value for money.

Visa and Health Requirements

Visitors from the EU, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand currently require a valid passport, but not a visa, for entry to Norway. If you are a national of any other country, please check visa regulations with your nearest Embassy of Norway.

At present, there are no specific and compulsory health requirements for entry to Norway. You may also wish to check the advice given to travellers by the Department of Health (<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/healthcare-when-travelling-abroad/>) and the FCO (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>).

Insurance

It is essential, and a condition of booking, that you protect yourself with a suitable travel insurance policy as soon as you book a trip. We can arrange comprehensive cover for UK residents. For further details, please see the website or ask our office.

Size of Party

This trip will run with a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 14 guests.