

Hiking in Norway's Fjord Country

FROM BERGEN TO NÆRØYFJORD, HARDANGERFJORD, AND FOLGEFONNA GLACIER



Wilderness Travel

Overview



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

Length: 11 days
Arrive: Bergen, Norway
Depart: Bergen, Norway
Lodging: 10 nights hotels
Meals: All meals included
Activity: Cultural, Hiking & Trekking

Trip Level: 1 2 ③ 4 5 6

8 hiking days on moderate trails with some steep sections, 3-6 hours a day, with one optional glacier hike

QUESTIONS?

Our Area Specialists are your single point of contact and would be happy to answer any questions about your trip!

800.368.2794 | 510.558.2488

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hike in pristine landscapes of mountains, forests, farms, and tranquil fjords
- Savor the cultural heritage of quaint fjord-side towns, be welcomed at family farms
- Explore by RIB boat, sample seasonal summer dishes, from local lamb to mountain trout
- Enjoy cozy waterside hotels with grand views across the fjords

Introduction



Mighty glaciers carved Norway's majestic landscapes and the grand-scale majesty is evident everywhere, from snow-capped peaks to deep blue fjords. We'll be surrounded by nature's splendor as we explore two spectacular fjords—Sognefjord, Norway's largest, and ethereal Hardangerfjord. We'll hike through lush orchards, across historic trails, to epic viewpoints with bird's-eye views down the length of the fingers of the fjord, and even on a glacier (if conditions are right), with options for a dip in the fjords at our waterside hotels. In between, we explore villages and taste the wares at family-run farms.

TRIP DATES

June 4-14, 2024

June 26-July 6, 2024

July 9-19, 2024

July 23-August 2, 2024

August 6-16, 2024

August 20-30, 2024

June 3-13, 2025

June 25-July 5, 2025

July 8-18, 2025

July 22-August 1, 2025

August 5-15, 2025

August 19-29, 2025

Itinerary



Overnight: Clarion Hotel Havnekontoret

With its ideal location and impressive Baroque architecture, Hotel Havnekontoret is a wonderful introduction to Bergen. Guest rooms have comfortable beds, spacious bathrooms, and nice views overlooking the city. Relax next to the fireplace with a glass of your favorite tipples and be sure to ask the reception about visiting the hotel's clock tower—the perfect place to enjoy views of the town and medieval Bryggen wharf.

Meals: L, D

Hiking Details: 5 miles, 3-4 hours, 1,000' ascent/descent

DAY 1 BERGEN, NORWAY / MT. FLØYEN

We meet at 9:00 this morning for a trip briefing, then ride the Fløibanen funicular from the city center to the top of Mt. Fløyen (1,056'), watching spectacular views unfold as we ascend. At the top, we set out for a morning hike up through forests and along lakes to Mt. Blåmanen (1,845'). We'll have panoramic views out over the North Sea, down into Bergen, and along the scattered islands along the coast. After lunch at the Fløyen Folk Restaurant, we descend via the funicular, with the option to descend on foot all the way back to Bergen on your own. We then head out for a fascinating walking tour of the town, with its picturesque waterfront and leaning rows of the Hanseatic trader's gabled wooden buildings from the 1700s. Our tour ends right at the restaurant where we enjoy our Welcome Dinner.

Bergen: The gateway to Norway's fjord country, Bergen is a thousand-year-old city set on a quiet fjord with a backdrop of seven steep mountains. We recommend arriving early to enjoy it (we are happy to book extra nights at our group hotel, an "on your own" expense). The city is full of welcoming cafes and art galleries as well as a bustling fish market, and its famous waterfront, Bryggen, a World Heritage Site, is a testament to Bergen's role in the Hanseatic League's trading empire.

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel Husum (or Fretheim Hotel)

This delightful hotel has a long history dating back nearly 200 years! Originally a coaching and posting inn, it offers just eight guest rooms, all decorated in traditional decor and featuring modern amenities. It's just a mile from the famous Borgund Stave Church. Note: While this small hotel is certainly historic and quite charming, there is one twin-bedded room with just a half-bath; a private full bath and shower is just down the hall.

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 40 minutes

Transportation Time: 5.5 hours on ferry; 1 hour 40 minutes driving

DAY 2 SOGNEFJORD FERRY / BORGUND

We board the morning ferry for a scenic 5.5-hour journey through magnificent Sognefjord, the longest fjord in Norway (and the second longest in the world at over 120 miles), carving its way deep into the heart of mountain country. This steep-sided fjord, with its walls more than 3,300 feet high, meets Norway's highest mountains to create one of the most breathtaking landscapes on the planet. We arrive in the beautiful town of Aurland, set along the tributary to Sognefjord. After a late lunch at the much-loved local café—be sure to try one of their cinnamon or cardamom rolls that are a staple of Norwegian cuisine—we head over the mountains via Gamle Aurlandsvegen, a Norwegian Scenic Route, as we head to our secluded hotel. Dinner and overnight at Husum Hotel, a small hotel with abundant historical charm, set well away from the modern tourist path (but along the original tourist path—the King's Road).

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel Husum

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 4.5 miles, 3-4 hours, up to 950' ascent and descent

“It goes without saying that Norway is a beautiful and unique country, but our guide made it come alive for us with experiences we could never have had on our own.”

-Linda G., W. Hartford, CT

DAY 3 BORGUND STAVE CHURCH / KING'S ROAD

A short transfer brings us to the astounding 12th century Borgund Stave Church, built after the end of the Viking era and incredibly evocative, with its deep-tarred timbers, carved dragon eaves, and magnificent scalloped shingles. The museum nearby gives fantastic insight into the lingering influence of the Viking culture, which swept across Europe and as far as Istanbul, Iceland, and Greenland, raiding and pillaging, but also founding settlements that have become thriving cities, from Dublin on the River Liffey to Reykjavík and even the first settlements of North America. After our visit, we take a short hike that provides us with amazing views, followed by a hike along The King's Road, accompanied by a local historian and storyteller, bringing us back to the early days of the 1700s when travelers used this as their main route between the country's two main cities, Oslo and Bergen. We'll cross the most scenic section of the King's Road, Vindhellavegen, and continue past a waterfall and old World War II German structures to arrive at an area of old farm crofts with buildings dating back to the 1800s. Here we'll enjoy a picnic with packed lunches from Husum Hotel's impressive breakfast spread of local goods (we'll be in the heartland of Western Norway's small but precious and bountiful farm country!). We return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Itinerary



Overnight: Brakanes Hotel

This hotel is an absolutely amazing location overlooking the deep blue Hardanger Fjord, and the guest rooms take full advantage of the wondrous view. It has been recently remodeled but is still a very simple accommodation.

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 3 miles, 3-4 hours, 1,000' ascent, 500' descent

Transportation Time: 1.5 hours in RIB, 2 hours 45 minutes driving

DAY 4 RIB EXCURSION / NAERØYFJORD / HIKE TO GOAT FARM / ULVIK

From Flåm, we head out aboard RIBs (rigid inflatable boats) for an excursion up Naerøysfjord, so narrow that the big cruise ships can't enter, and so beautiful that the entire fjord has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here you'll have an up-close experience of the glacial carving of Norway's legendary coast, as we pass under near vertical cliff-sides and past tiny farms. (Note: like huge Zodiacs with a rigid hull, RIBs are wonderfully open vessels that allow us to experience the landscape fully.) We'll be dropped off at a small dock where we'll begin our hike before lunch. Heading up to a little balcony above the fjord, we are welcomed at a family farm where goats are raised for their milk, which is made into absolutely lovely goat cheese. You'll enjoy a chance to learn about life on this small farm—and taste some of the products during lunch—before we head back down to our boats for the return to Flåm. In Flåm, we board a van and drive to Voss for a quick walk to stretch our legs at Bordalsgjelet, a deep, dramatic, and geologically fascinating gorge eroded by the deposits flowing beneath the glacier that covered the region during the last ice age. Our walk is short, but on a narrow, rocky trail built into the wall of the gorge (there is a handrail to hold onto all along the way). After our walk, we head to the little town of Ulvik, nestled on the shores of Hardangerfjord, where our accommodation is right on the water's edge. We'll arrive in time for a late afternoon swim in the fjord or soak in the fjord-side hot tub and sauna. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel Ullensvang

This former staging inn—now a veritable “grand dame” of hotels—sports a unique mix of lovingly kept traditions and stylish luxury. It enjoys a beautiful fjord-side location with views of the snow-capped Hardanger range. Most of the guest rooms have private balconies, and facilities include indoor and outdoor swimming pools as well as a ramp leading into the water so you can take a dip in the fjord if you're up to it! A stroll on the hotel's “fruit walk” leads through cherry, apple, and pear orchards.

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 4 miles, 2-3 hours, 500' ascent, 1,500' descent

DAY 5 CIDER FARM / LOFTHUS

Hardangerfjord, Ulvik, and the surrounding area is Norway's lush orchard country. More than 600,000 fruit trees are cultivated along Hardangerfjord, from cherries to apples—and a host of traditional cider farms—in an idyllic setting of green mountains and waterfalls. This morning's hike bring us through forested trails, with views of a beautiful fjord, to a family-run cider farm surrounded by rich orchards. We'll hear about the history of the farm and its operations from the owner, and enjoy cider tasting and a delightful lunch. We continue our hike with a walk down to the ferry dock in Ulvik, where we take the late afternoon ferry through Hardangerfjord to the tranquil hamlet of Lofthus, picturesquely set along the fjord and famous for its orchards.

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel Ullensvang

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 3 miles, 2.5 hours, 400' ascent/descent

Transportation Time: 2 hours by ferry

“This trip tops my list; at the end of it, I felt more satisfied than after any other I have taken. I have been on several Wilderness Travel trips and have never had a bad experience—they have all been excellent, visiting beautiful countries and experiencing different cultures. But the activities on Norway’s Fjord Country provided more opportunities to get to know the land and people than any trip I’ve been on.”

—Ann S., New Cumberland, PA

DAY 6 HARDANGERFJORD / LOFTHUS

Our day begins with a history tour of the hotel’s grounds, followed by an optional kayaking trip through the Sørfjorden finger of Hardangerfjord. After lunch, the remainder of the day is at leisure to make use of the hotel’s free rowboats, indoor and outdoor pools, and sauna. If you’re up for it, take a swim in the fjord. You can also visit Ullensvang Church, built around 1250—its graveyard is so old!

Itinerary



Overnight: Hotel Ullensvang

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 7.5 miles, 5.5 hours, 1,800' ascent/descent

“The spectacular beauty and bucolic life of Norway’s Fjord country will be a lasting memory.”

–Shirley R., San Rafael, CA

DAY 7 LOFTHUS / HOVDEN / TRADITIONAL FARM

We hike up to Elvadalen (River Valley) for a good view of the Skrikjofossen and Rjukandefoss waterfalls, then continue on a loop hike up the slopes of Hovden for spectacular panoramas across Hardangerfjord and the surrounding mountains. Along the way, we’ll enjoy glimpses of the northernmost fingers of the Folgefonna glacier that grow and retract with the seasons. Only 3% of Norway’s land is arable, so the apple orchards of Hardanger are extra special and the produce tastes as sweet as the views. We’ll have a packed lunch en route. After hiking back down, we visit a historic farmstead that dates to the 1600s to learn about traditional farm life in Lofthus. The rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy the setting of our hotel or, if you didn’t do it the previous day, end the hike with a dip in the fjord!

Itinerary



Overnight: Utne Hotel

This charming and distinctive historic hotel, set along beautiful Hardangerfjord, has been in continuous operation since 1722. Although recently renovated, the Utne still retains its beautiful old world charm. The staff is warm and welcoming and the food is superb. And getting here couldn't be easier—it's right in front of the ferry dock!

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 8.5 miles, 5.5-6 hrs, 1,500' ascent, 2,000' descent

DAY 8 KINSARVIK / UTNE

From the village of Kinsarvik on the shores of Hardangerfjord, we hike up along the Kinso River to the spectacular waterfalls Tveitafossen and Nyastølfossen, with a tranquil river flowing between them, and then further along a deep woodland trail. We hike back by a partly different route, then stroll through the quaint old Viking town of Kinsarvik as we head toward the ferry. We take the public ferry to Utne, one of the prettiest towns on Hardangerfjord, set on the northern tip of the Folgefonna Peninsula, where Hardangerfjord splits into the Granvinsfjord, the Eidfjord, and the Sørfjord. Dinner and overnight at the delightful Utne Hotel, one of Norway's oldest hotels, in continual operation since 1722. Although recently renovated, the hotel still retains its old world charm. Dining here is a treat. Menus are based on produce from the west part of Norway, and dishes are seasonal, with respect for local food culture. Lamb and smoked salmon are some of the typical summer offerings, and we'll enjoy a cider pairing with our meal. Unfortunately, the hotel cannot provide vegan meals, but vegetarian options are available.

Itinerary



Overnight: Utne Hotel

Meals: B, L, D

Hiking Details: 3 miles, 2 hours, 1,000' ascent/descent

Transportation Time: 3 hours driving

“Great trip! Beautiful, challenging hikes. Snowshoeing on the glacier was the best: a once in a lifetime experience.”

–Michael B., Columbia, MD

DAY 9 FOLGEFONNA GLACIER / GLACIER HIKE / UTNE

A scenic 1.5-hour drive brings us up to the Folgefonna Glacier, the third largest icecap in Norway. Depending on conditions, we enjoy a fantastic day of glacier hiking, complete with helmets, ice axes, and crampons (all supplied for the hike). With our local guides, we'll rope up for an adventure that brings us across the ice. Views from atop the glacier stretch out over magnificent Hardangerfjord and, on a clear day, out to the North Sea. After our picnic lunch, we'll head down to a cafe at the base of the glacier for a welcoming cup of steaming hot chocolate. Heading to our historic hotel in Utne, we have dinner in its lovely and historic dining room.

Please note: With any glacier activity, weather and surface conditions will have the final say on our activities. If the conditions are better for snowshoeing, we'll strap on snowshoes for our glacier experience. And if conditions aren't right for those activities, we will do an alternative hike in the vicinity of Folgefonna National Park.

Itinerary



DAY 10 HARDANGER FOLK MUSEUM / BERGEN

On a guided tour at the open-air Hardanger Folk Museum this morning, we can stroll among a wonderful collection of traditional wooden buildings and boats and see exhibits on Hardanger's folk traditions, including woodcarving and the making of the famed Hardanger fiddle. On our way back to Bergen, we visit the Hardanger Maritime Center, with its artifacts from Norway's seafaring past; it is also a wood boat building and restoration center. In the evening we gather for a Farewell Dinner.

Overnight: Clarion Hotel Havnekontoret

With its ideal location and impressive Baroque architecture, Hotel Havnekontoret is a wonderful introduction to Bergen. Guest rooms have comfortable beds, spacious bathrooms, and nice views overlooking the city. Relax next to the fireplace with a glass of your favorite tippie and be sure to ask the reception about visiting the hotel's clock tower—the perfect place to enjoy views of the town and medieval Bryggen wharf.

Meals: B, L, D

Transportation Time: 2 hours by bus, 20 minutes by ferry

Meals: B

DAY 11 DEPART

Transfer to the airport and depart on homeward bound flights.

Pricing

TRIP COST

**Prices are per person, based on double occupancy
2024**

\$7,195 (12-14 members)

\$7,595 (9-11 members)

\$7,995 (4-8 members)

Single supplement: \$1,075

Please contact us for future years' pricing

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

PAYMENT TERMS

At time of reservation: \$600

90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION & TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No Charge!

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details:

www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Wilderness Travel Trip Leader and local guides
- Accommodations in hotels
- All meals
- A glass of wine or beer with dinner
- All ground transportation and baggage handling from meeting until departure
- All activities as indicated in Detailed Itinerary

TRIP DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Travel to and from the arrival and departure location as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- Additional hotel nights outside the trip's scheduled dates
- Optional gratuities to Trip Leaders or staff
- Optional travel insurance
- Other expenses of a personal nature (some alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.)

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Because the prices published for our program are set so far in advance of the trip dates, we are occasionally faced with exceptional cost increases and/or currency fluctuations that affect the actual cost of running the trip. In most years, no price changes are necessary. However, we do reserve the right to raise or lower the trip price if there is a significant change in costs or exchange rates. If this is the case, your final invoice will reflect the difference in trip cost.

Arrival & Departure

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Suggested Airport: Bergen Airport (BGO)

Suggested Date & Time: Anytime prior to Day 1

Meeting Place: You will meet your Trip Leader in the lobby of the Clarion Hotel Havnekontoret in Bergen at 9:00 am on Day 1.

Trip members are responsible for transferring on their own from the airport to the group hotel. The easiest way to get from the Bergen Airport to the Clarion Hotel Havnekontoret is by taxi. It is a 20-30 minute drive and costs \$60-\$70.

Upon arrival in Bergen, you can also take a bus to the hotel. The airport bus between Bergen Flesland Airport and the center of Bergen takes approximately 25-35 minutes and departs approximately every 15 minutes between 6:00 am and 11:00 pm on weekdays. You will need to get off at Fish Market ("Fisketorget") and the hotel is a short 5-minute walk. The cost is approximately \$22 per person. Visit www.flybussen.no for detailed information.

The most recent transportation addition is the completion of the light rail from the Bergen Flesland Airport to the Bergen Sentrum (Center) station, "Byparken." This takes about 45 minutes. Tickets are sold at the light rail station, credit cards payment preferred, and cost about 40 NOK (~\$4.50). From the Byparken station, it is an easy 15-minute walk through the city center to the Clarion Hotel Havnekontoret.

DEPARTURE

Suggested Airport: Bergen Airport (BGO)

Suggested Date & Time: Anytime on Day 11

Trip members are responsible for transferring on their own from the group hotel to the airport. The most convenient and quickest way to the airport from the hotel is by taxi. You can also take the bus or shuttle transfer from the hotel to Bergen Airport. Your guides can help to arrange this for you during your trip.

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Norway. Travel to Bergen, Norway, from the US is primarily routed through London and Copenhagen, with good schedules and fares available on many airlines.

Note: Icelandair currently allows travelers a stopover in Iceland for up to a week with no fees in order to promote tourism in Iceland. A great pre- or post-trip experience alongside Norway.

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

Trip Leaders

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. For more information, including client comments about them and which specific trips they will be leading, please visit wildernesstravel.com/leaders.



SANTIAGO BEJARANO

Santiago Bejarano trained in Environmental Sciences in his native Ecuador and began his guiding career by bringing visitors to the jungle and highlands of Ecuador and the storied Galapagos Islands, where he worked as a naturalist. He later moved to Britain, which has been his home now for many years, and divides his time between Ecuador and Europe. Santiago guides for us on the high trails of the Alps of France, Italy, Spain, and Switzerland and into the epic fjords of Norway. “Guiding gives me the chance to be a link between cultures and to share my passion for nature. It also allows me to spend a lot of time in a place I really love—out in nature itself.” He is fluent in English, Spanish, and German.



KILLIAN BUCKLEY

Killian Buckley grew up in Killarney, Ireland. His parents, a harpist and a poet, instilled in him a great appreciation for the beautiful things in life, and once he found the mountains, it didn't take long for him to become addicted to the wild beauty he found there. He began hiking and climbing regularly, and what began as a hobby soon became a way of life that led him on extraordinary adventures, including climbing some of the Alps' famous north faces and an ascent, with fellow WT guide Naoise O Muirheartaigh, of Yosemite's El Capitan. In 2021, on his birthday, Killian and his partner Maggie welcomed their first daughter Henia into the world. The three of them live in Chamonix, France. Currently, he is adjusting to fatherhood and figuring out how much risk he is willing to take in the high mountains, but still enormously passionate about sharing his love and knowledge of the Earth's wildest reaches.



ROB NOONAN

Rob Noonan came by his love of nature and the mountains early, adventuring throughout most of the Americas from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego and later earning a degree in environmental studies from Prescott College in Arizona. He has guided our Patagonia journeys since 1994, our hikes in the spectacular European Alps since 2007, and he is also our "northern ambassador" to Iceland and Greenland. In between trips, Rob lives in Flagstaff, Arizona, where he enjoys hiking and river rafting.

Trip Leaders



NAOISE O MUIRCHEARTAIGH

Born on the Dingle Peninsula and into the distinct Gaelic culture of his ancestors, Naoise O Muircheartaigh (the Gaelic spelling of Moriarty) has been steeped in the culture of Ireland since birth and comes from generations of mountain guides, including his father, Con Moriarty, longtime leader of our Ireland trips. Naoise (pronounced “nee-sha”) has been hiking Ireland’s mountains and coasts since he could walk, and his pursuits as a rock and ice climber have led him around the world, from New Zealand to North Africa and the US. He has a deep love of nature and for sharing world’s wild landscapes and ancient cultures.



STEFANO POZZI

Originally from Italy, Stefano Pozzi has grown up with a passion for the outdoors. He graduated from the University of Milan and later became a resident of Norway, where he studied Arctic natural history for a year on the island of Spitsbergen. Today he spends several months a year working on expedition vessels between Antarctica and Greenland, and guides trips for us in Norway, Finland, and the Alps. “I love being out in nature and being amazed by its beauty, and my hope is that I can share my knowledge with trip members, and in turn, learn something new every day from them.”



ORRI SIGURJÓNSSON

Orri Sigurjónsson grew up in the small town of Hvanneyri in the western region of Iceland. He studied carpentry in college, but his true calling has always been the enchantments of Iceland's rugged landscapes, and he has been guiding in Iceland since 2010. "Traveling throughout the mountains is my passion," he says, "and being able to share that passion with other travelers and show them around my beautiful country is something I consider a privilege." When he's not leading trips, he enjoys mountaineering, skiing, ice climbing, skydiving, and playing music with his band, Vertigo.



SKYE MCDONALD

Skye McDonald lives in Scotland’s Highland capital, Inverness. She has worked as a Trip Leader in 35 countries since the millennium and lived in Germany, France, and Tanzania. “Bringing understanding between peoples of very different cultures and backgrounds is one of the joys of being a Trip Leader, and of course, the chance to make friends around the world.” Closer to home, she delights in sharing the glories of her native Scotland, and says that a good day scaling some of the beautiful Scottish mountains is hard to beat. Skye speaks German, French, beginners' Portuguese, and unusually, a smattering of Swahili from earlier years as a volunteer agricultural officer in Tanzania. Life continues to be an adventure for Skye, who has recently taken up bee-keeping, wild-water swimming, and scuba diving.

Trip Leaders



ANNIE HAWKINS

Annie Hawkins, born and raised in a small village in Burgundy, is a passionate world traveler and one of our most enchanting Trip Leaders. After studying art history in Provence, Annie moved to California, where she led adventure tours in the American Southwest and realized that leading adventure trips was her vocation—nothing would keep her inside an office again! She has led exclusively for Wilderness Travel since 1995 and has led journeys for us in France, Spain, Sri Lanka, Morocco, Niger, Oman, and more! She divides her time between Europe and San Francisco, where she lives with her husband.



IRENE DE BENEDICTIS

Originally from Rome, Irene is a physical therapist specializing in Ayurvedic medicine and also a seasoned WT Trip Leader. Her love of different cultures and languages (she knows seven!), paired with her love for hikes and pilgrimages (she walked the Camino de Santiago...twice) makes her a wonderful traveling companion. Irene's father is a member of the Italian congregation of St. James, which is responsible for the upkeep of pilgrim trails from Italy into Spain and Jerusalem, and she has also worked as a “hospitalera” (pilgrims' albergue host) in Italy. Fun fact: Irene wrote a book called *Spaghetti and Sauna* about the cultural differences between Italy, her home country, and Finland, where she lived for four years.

What to Expect

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated **Level 3, Moderate to Strenuous**, according to our trip grading system. While we do not see major elevation gain or loss, you will need to be comfortable hiking 8.5 miles a day and being on your feet for up to 6 hours a day. Trail conditions, weather, and the group's level of fitness can affect hiking times and pacing.

Average Hiking Day

- 4-5 miles
- 3-4 hours
- 1,000 feet gain/loss

Challenge Day

- Day 8 - 8.5 miles, 6 hours, 1,500 feet gain, and 2,000 feet loss

TERRAIN

All hiking is below 2,000 feet in elevation on mountainous trails. The hikes are mostly moderate and can sometimes be damp, rocky, and muddy. It rains almost every day, so be prepared to hike in mud! There are occasional short, steep sections, and Day 9 includes a 2-hour walk across snowfields with either snowshoes or crampons. No prior experience is needed for this, and it is not technical.

GETTING IN SHAPE

We strongly urge you to train for your trip, as your enjoyment will be highly dependent on your level of fitness. The best training for a hike is to hike, especially over hills or rough terrain. Next best are running, swimming, bicycling, or other cardiovascular exercise. Stair climbing machines are excellent preparation for hiking uphill. Your feet should also be well prepared—make sure your hiking boots are sturdy, comfortable, and thoroughly broken-in.

WEATHER

Daytime temperatures are usually in the mid 50s°F and 60s°F, and nighttime temperatures typically drop to the high 30s°F or 40s°F. The weather can provide spectacular and clear days, but rain is very frequent so it is important to bring rain gear and layers. It's possible that hikes will have to be changed or canceled due to the weather, but as rain is so common, this is only in extreme cases.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Some accommodations are in small, charming hotels. Since they are often in historic buildings, the rooms are not always of uniform or international size. We stay in one hotel with only single beds available and may only have en-suite restrooms with a shared bath or shower. Our leaders do their best to assign rooms in a fair way so that all participants experience an equal advantage throughout the trip as a whole. Please note that rooms in Scandinavia are smaller than in the US, and at the Utne Hotel, there is a very short, narrow, curved staircase that is used to access the rooms. Single rooms can be requested but are not always available, due to the limited space in the hotels. If you prefer a single room, please make your request as early as possible.

What to Expect

CUISINE

On many days, we will be making our lunches at the hotel's breakfast buffet. This is a tradition for hikers in Norway, and the extensive breakfast buffets include fresh bread, deli meats, tomatoes, smoked salmon (of course!), cheeses, and fruit. Dinners are hearty local fare, including a lot of fresh fish. Many are buffet-style at our hotels, and this is often the only option in smaller fjord-side villages. Please note that in Europe, the dinner hour is considerably later than it is in the US. We do our best to secure early reservations for our groups, but most often the evening meal will be at 7:30 pm.

TRANSPORTATION

We will experience Norway's excellent ferry system, which is a wonderful way to be immersed in Norwegian culture. You will need to be able to carry your own bags on and off the ferries, and for the short distances between the ferry landings and our hotels (not more than 200 feet). We recommend one medium-sized rolling suitcase and a daypack. Extra luggage can be left at our hotel in Bergen during the trip.

HIKING DETAILS BY DAY				DRIVING DETAILS
DAY	MILES	HOURS	ELEV. ASCENT/DESCENT	HOURS
1	5 miles	3-4 hours	+/- 1000'	
2	1.5 miles	.5 hours	+270' / -600'	5.5 hours by ferry, 1 hour 40 minutes driving
3	4.5 miles	3-4 hours	+/-950'	
4	3 miles	3-4 hours	+1000' / -500'	1.5 hours in RIB, 2 hours 45 minutes driving
5	4 miles	2-3 hours	+500' / -1500'	
6	3 miles	2.5 hours	+/- 400'	2 hours by ferry
7	7.5 miles	5.5 hours	+/- 1800'	
8	8.5 miles	5.5-6 hours	+1500' / -2000'	20 minutes in van, 30 minutes by ferry
9	3 miles	2 hours	+/- 1000'	3 hours
10				2 hours by bus, 20 mins ferry

AVERAGE DAILY MAX/MIN °F												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Bergen	34/27	34/27	39/28	45/34	54/41	59/48	61/50	61/50	54/45	48/41	39/34	36/28
Flåm	23/16	23/16	28/19	36/25	48/34	55/43	57/45	55/43	48/37	39/32	28/23	25/18
Ulvik	29/18	28/15	33/19	39/26	50/33	57/39	63/44	61/43	52/38	41/30	32/22	28/16
RAINFALL - INCHES												
Bergen	11.8	8.7	9.9	5.6	5.3	6.5	7.1	8.7	15.3	15.6	14.1	13.9
Flåm	4.9	3.2	3.8	1.8	2.2	3.1	3.5	4.4	6.6	6.7	5.6	5.8
Ulvik	2.7	1.9	1.9	2.0	1.8	2.8	3.0	3.3	2.4	3.0	2.7	2.1

Additional Information

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 or email us at info@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.

Toucan Club Rewards & Discounts



MEN'S T-SHIRT



WOMEN'S T-SHIRT



PATAGONIA SYNCHILLA FLEECE VEST
+ KLEEN KANTEEN 27OZ WATER BOTTLE



PATAGONIA R1 PULLOVER

We are very proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business, and have established the Wilderness Travel Toucan Club to reward you for your loyalty. For more information, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at wildtrav.com/resources/toucan-club.

Here's how it works:

YOUR FIRST TRIP

As a first-time traveler, you receive a lightweight Wilderness Travel T-shirt and set of durable WT Luggage Tags. On subsequent trips, we're happy to send you a new WT T-shirt and set of Luggage Tags by request.

YOUR SECOND TRIP

A top quality Wilderness Travel stainless steel water bottle by Klean Kanteen and a cozy Wilderness Travel fleece vest by Patagonia (\$100 value).

YOUR THIRD TRIP

A versatile Wilderness Travel R-1 pullover by Patagonia (\$130 value).

YOUR FOURTH TRIP

Discounts on the cost of your trip begin! You receive a 4% discount on the tour cost.

FIVE AND MORE TRIPS

You receive a 5% discount on the base trip cost. On your sixth trip, you receive a 6% discount, and so on up to your 10th trip. The maximum discount is 10%, with a ceiling of \$500.

Note: Due to special pricing considerations, Toucan Club discounts do not apply to our Private Journeys or Special Events. However, your participation on these trips does count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel's regular adventures.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Toucan Club travel discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount, unless otherwise specified. Discounts are deducted from the base trip cost and shown on the final invoice. The base trip cost is the main land/tier cost and does not include single supplement fees, extensions, internal airfare, or other additional charges. Bonus gifts (T-shirts, luggage tags, vests, water bottles, and pullovers) will be mailed approximately three weeks prior to trip departure. Terms and conditions of Toucan Club bonuses are subject to change or cancellation at the discretion of Wilderness Travel, Inc.

Travel Notes



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Conde Nast Traveler*, 2024, 4-time winner

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 11-time winner

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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