



FJORDLAND IMMERSION: Norway

JULY 22–31, 2024

ONWARD TRAVEL ✈️

EST 2014



OSLO OPERA HOUSE



Onward Travel's first small group tour to Scandinavia features an incredible destination: Norway, where we'll visit the West Fjords and the capital city, Oslo!

The height of summer is the perfect time to visit Norway. Picturesque cherry, apple, and berry farms line Norway's dramatic glacier-carved fjords. And the waters have warmed enough for a brisk dip.

The tour begins in Bergen, gateway to the fjords, and ends in Oslo. After two nights in Bergen, we'll travel by ferry to quiet and pretty Balestrand on the Sognefjord, Norway's deepest and longest fjord. After three-nights there, we'll cruise the narrow and breathtaking Nærøfjord, a UNESCO site, to reach the country's "fruit basket," Hardanger, a region known as the Champagne of hard cider. After two nights at lovely Hotel Ullensvang, we're hopping aboard the high speed train to Oslo, a green city perched at the top of the Oslofjord.

Throughout the tour, you'll be inspired by the scenery that is surely some of the finest in the world, as well as the Norwegian way of life and local cuisine which features seafood, reindeer, fresh picked berries, and real culinary talent. Norwegian Tour Director Pål will expertly guide you through his home country. So many special experiences are planned: go RIB boating, visit a wooden stave church, sip hard cider and fresh juice, lay eyes on Europe's largest glacier, hike to scenic views, take in spectacular waterfalls, and so much more! There is much to discover, join us!

IMAGINE YOURSELF...

Waking up to expansive fjord views

Tasting hard cider in a tiny orchard

Jumping from a sauna into the fjord in Oslo

Welcome to the West Fjords!

DAY 1: MONDAY JULY 22

- View the beautiful flower plantings around Bergen - so lovely!
- Savor your first gourmet meal featuring local Scandinavian products

Velkommen to Bergen ~ Gateway to Norway's Fjords! Upon arrival at Bergen Flesland Airport, grab a cab or the Flybussen into town, about 25 minutes. The Flybussen airport bus stops close to Hotel Oleana, our stylish and comfortable homebase for the next two nights. Take some time to explore the city: it is easily walkable and charming.

Late afternoon, gather at Hotel Oleana for a welcome drink with your Norwegian Tour Director, Pål Bjarne Johansen. Get acquainted with your fellow travelers and meet Pål. Then, head out together for a special welcome dinner at Allmuen, a creative restaurant that offers tasting menus featuring local products. Toast your traveling companions ~ *skål!*

Meals Dinner

Sightseeing in Bergen

DAY 2: TUESDAY JULY 23

- Visit Bergen's market on the harbor, full of seafood and delicacies
- Stroll historic Bryggen, founded around the year 1000

Bergen is our oyster today! After a nice breakfast spread at Hotel Oleana, join Pål to get to know this quaint town. Visit Schøtstuene museum, located in Bryggen, a row of Hanseatic heritage commercial buildings alongside Vågen harbor that is a UNESCO world heritage site. This used to be an important center of commerce, and the museum is dedicated to providing insight into the Hanseatic merchant's everyday life and work, so we'll travel back in time to the Middle Ages. Then take the Fløibanen Funicular up Fløyen Mountain for panoramic views of Bergen, framed by mountains, fjords and ocean. The views will wow you! For more wow moments, take a look at the beautiful berries and products at the bustling harborside market Fisketorget (The Fish Market).

Lunch today will be at historic Bryggeloftet Restaurant ~ perhaps you'd like an open face shrimp sandwich or bowl of mussels (highly recommend!). And there will be plenty of free time this afternoon and evening to discover Bergen, do some souvenir shopping, and enjoy dinner on your own.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

OnwardTravel.co Based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and the Hudson Valley, New York

Boat to Balestrand

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY JULY 24

- Taste several jewel-toned ciders, as delicious as they are beautiful
- Feast on some local seafood from the expansive dinner buffet

We'll depart Bergen this morning on the Express Boat to Balestrand. It is approximately 200 km by car, but we'll be traveling in the waterways and fjords. Get an interesting look at the region from the water and enjoy a relaxing morning of easy travel and glorious views. At noon we'll arrive in Balestrand, a small town with a population of around 1,400 people. The town is ideally located on the northern shore of the Sognefjord, and we'll take in those views from the lovely Kviknes Hotel. After dropping our luggage at the hotel, we'll walk 20 minutes to Ciderhuset, admiring the cute town and the fjord views on the way.

Ciderhuset is one of the region's best known cider producers. They ferment and distill a range of products. We'll visit their orchard and learn about the farming operation, then enjoy a cider tasting and lunch. This family-owned award-winning business will be great fun to experience. After lunch, we'll settle in a Kviknes Hotel, managed by the Kvigne family since 1822. Each evening, we'll enjoy a delicious buffet dinner together.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



The Stunning Sognefjord

DAY 4: THURSDAY JULY 25

- Hang on tight while your RIB boat flies down the fjord
- Enjoy an afternoon activity...or do nothing at all!

Balestrand is the perfect place to catch your breath, and maybe increase your heart rate a bit. We'll do just that this morning as we take a RIB boat journey to the Finna fjord, the most secluded arm of the Sognefjord that is a sort of fjord within a fjord. Cruise through this narrow passage and take in the silence and tranquility. RIB (rigid inflatable boat) boats can go super fast but are also stable and agile in rough water. Don't worry, the fjord never gets very rough, but the ride is thrilling and fun, and covers some ground.

This afternoon, you may like to visit the little local aquarium, take up a perch on a rocking chair overlooking the fjord with a good book in hand, or maybe enjoy another adventure. Add an optional afternoon kayak excursion or join Pål for a hike in the nearby forest. There are many nice trails right from the village.

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Solvorn Day Trip

DAY 5: FRIDAY JULY 26

- Get super close to an impressive glacier
- Walk up a hill where a nearly 1,000 year old church awaits you

After an early breakfast, we're off for adventure. We're visiting the village of Solvorn, with a glacier detour en route. Our first stop is the town Fjærland, a European book town! We'll drive to a great viewing point where we can see the Jostedalsglacier (the largest in continental Europe) looming large. It's breathtaking! Then we'll get a different perspective at the Glacier Museum which provides a hands-on look at glaciers and climate.

Midday we'll find ourselves in charming Solvorn, situated on Lustrafjord, the innermost part of the Sognefjord. We will have a delightful lunch at Walaker Hotell, Norway's oldest hotel. Enjoy their delicious food, fresh juice, and local art collection. Following lunch, we'll take a short ferry right across the fjord to Urnes to visit Ørnes Staves Church. A stave church is a medieval wooden Christian church building once common in north-western Europe. This one dates to 1130 and is Norway's oldest. Our bus will be waiting to take us back to Balestrand for one last evening overlooking the Sognefjord.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

The Scenic Route

DAY 6: SATURDAY JULY 27

- Soak in fresh air and countless waterfalls cruising the Nærøfjord
- Snap a pic of postage stamp size apple orchards lining the fjords

We'll depart the hotel early mid morning with a packed lunch in hand (Norwegians love their piknicks). An 11am car ferry awaits and we'll spend 2.5 hours plying the Kaupanger to Gudvangen route. This ferry takes us through the 17-km long Nærøfjord, the wildest and most beautiful branch of the Sognefjord that is on the UNESCO World Heritage list. View mountains, waterfalls, and farms on the shores. Our bus will meet us to transfer the rest of the way to Hotel Ullensvang in the village of Lofthus.

Our journey took us away from the Sognefjord and we're now in the Hardanger region, considered the fruit bowl of Norway. The next two nights will be spent at the historical and luxurious Hotel Ullensvang, positioned on the Hardangerfjord. The hotel is a retreat of sorts with an indoor/outdoor pool featuring an 88-meter long swimming channel, games, gardens, and recreation. They also have a lovely restaurant where we'll enjoy dinner each evening.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Hardanger Immersion

DAY 7: SUNDAY JULY 28

- Taste traditional Norwegian *Betasuppe*
- Visit an apple orchard and taste their thoughtfully made ciders

Late morning, a few minutes walk from the hotel, we'll board the "cider boat." We're just going 15 minutes across the fjord but you can take this boat up and down the fjord visiting cider producers and taking in the scenery. Our destination is the folk museum Agatunet, a protected and authentic farm cluster where we can experience a Norwegian village center where the oldest building dates back to 1220. We'll have a traditional soup lunch and an informative tour. We will also have a hands-on experience to connect us with Norwegian heritage, cooking or crafting, based on offerings at the time we travel.

Relax poolside this afternoon, go hiking in Lofthus, or visit a cidery. Tonight we'll walk to Alvavoll Frukt Og Sidergard, a local cidery with a modern apple orchard. The owner will give us a tour of his farm and we'll enjoy a hard cider tasting and dinner of local meals and cheeses paired with his excellent ciders.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Onward to Oslo

DAY 8: MONDAY JULY 29

- Take one of the most beautiful train journeys in Europe
- Get acquainted with Oslo, a friendly and green city

We'll transfer to Voss this morning, in time to hop aboard the train traveling from Bergen to Oslo. It's a scenic 5.5 hour train trip, passing through many different landscapes. The tracks climb to 1200 meters, cross a variety of terrain, and feature 180 tunnels.

Mid afternoon, the train will terminate at Oslo Central Station, and you'll be in the middle of one of Europe's most innovative cities. Oslo is known for its connection to nature, walkability, and interesting museums. Our comfortable and centrally located hotel, Thon Opera Hotel, is just a two minute walk from the station. Pål will orient you to the city and then you're on your own for the evening.

Meals Breakfast

Exploring Norway's Capital

DAY 9: TUESDAY JULY 30

- Admire the relatable sculptures by Gustav Vigeland
- Jump in the Oslofjord, right in front of the Opera House!

Pål is really in his element now, taking you around his home city! Through a combination of on foot and public transport, you'll explore much of Oslo! Visit the Vigeland Sculpture Garden, Oslo City Hall where the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony takes place each December... and even have a typical hot dog lunch. Pål will provide a complete overview of Oslo and share about life in the city and its history.

Take time this afternoon to museum hop, souvenir shop, or simply wander Oslo as you please! Then, late afternoon, there's one last hurrah. The group will convene at a sauna on the harbor that we've rented exclusively for our group. Sit in the sauna, jump in the fjord, repeat...a very Norwegian thing to do! And it's all directly across the harbor from the Opera House! We'll bring some local brews and snacks for a very memorable happy hour and of course to toast our lovely time together! Head back to the hotel to freshen up before a delightful farewell dinner at Vaaghals restaurant, one of Pål's faves, where the contemporary cuisine really shines.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Farewell

DAY 10: WEDNESDAY JULY 31

No activities are scheduled today. Grab the Airport Express train that runs every 15 minutes from Oslo Central Station to the airport, or extend your stay and discover more of Scandinavia.

Meals Breakfast

Travelers should be physically active to participate in this tour.

Specifically, be comfortable walking for 20-30 minutes at a time on uneven terrain and able to manage one's own luggage on and off a ferry boat and train.

Trip Essentials

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| <p>BEGINS</p> | <p>Bergen, Norway on Monday, July 22, 2024 Meet at 5pm at Hotel Oleana for a welcome cocktail. No airport transfer provided, bus and taxi available at your convenience.</p> |
| <p>ENDS</p> | <p>Oslo, Norway on Wednesday, July 31, 2024 No activities are scheduled on 7/31. No airport transfer provided, excellent train connection from Oslo Central Station.</p> |
| <p>SUITABILITY & MOBILITY</p> | <p>This tour includes walking for up to 30 minutes at a time, plus stairs, uneven natural terrain and cobblestones. Travelers should be able to walk a mile at a comfortable pace. If you have limited mobility, we may be able to accommodate you, but it is essential to let us know at the time of registration. Travelers may always opt out of activities they deem too physically challenging but refunds will not be provided.</p> |
| <p>TOUR DATES & PRICE</p> | <p>July 22–31, 2024 Double Occupancy \$4,450 per traveler Single Supplement \$825 additional <i>Contact Onward if you are interested in a room upgrade or triple occupancy.</i> <i>You are welcome to pay by credit card, please add a 3% surcharge.</i></p> |
| <p>LODGING</p> | <p>Hotel Oleana 2 Nights <i>A boutique hotel with fun bold design and a nice central location. Restaurant/bar with terrace.</i></p> <p>Kviknes Hotel 3 Nights <i>Grand 1752 chalet-style hotel with a modern annex overlooking the Sognefjord.</i></p> <p>Hotel Ullensvang 2 Nights <i>Atmospheric hotel situated along Hardanger Fjord. Enjoy Ullensvang Bath, an 88-meter-long swimming channel. Gardens, private beach and paddle-boats.</i></p> <p>Thon Hotel Opera 2 Nights <i>Convenient, modern hotel right next to the train station. Comfortable rooms and a seriously impressive breakfast spread.</i></p> |

Onward Travel can assist you if you'd like to arrive early or extend your travels.

Considering arriving a night early? (Great idea!) Hotel Oleana is \$245 USD for the night of July 21, double occupancy, breakfast included.

If you'd like to stay on in Oslo, Thon Hotel Opera is \$195 per night, double occupancy, breakfast included.

Availability and rates subject to change. Upon your request to book, Onward Travel will add these hotel nights to your invoice, payable with your tour balance and non-refundable.

Trip price includes the following:

- Minibus, ferry boat, and train transportation to/from all scheduled activities and destinations
- Nine nights accommodations in comfortable rooms with en suite bath and fjord view upgrades
- Most meals: daily breakfast, six lunches, and seven dinners.
- Local experts and guides including Tour Director Pål Bjarne Johansen
- Activities, sightseeing and tours as detailed in the itinerary.
- Please note, for the buffet dinners at Kviknes Hotel & Hotel Ullensvang, beverages are additional. Alcoholic beverages on Fjordlands Immersion are not as free flowing as Onward's normal European tours as they're taxed heavily and quite expensive.

Air Travel

The tour will start in Bergen (BGO) and end in Oslo (OSL).

Please confirm with Onward Travel that the tour is a “go” before booking airfare.

Contact Onward Travel for assistance booking flights.



The Onward Travel Tour Director for this trip is Pål

Pål Bjarne Johansen is a tour guide, travel writer, sailor and videographer. Find him on YouTube and at www.norwaywithpal.com.

Pål is an expert on all things Norway, and also a charismatic, capable, and engaging guy. You'll love traveling with him!

Please take note of the following useful information, and view more at www.onwardtravel.co/letsgo



Once Onward Travel receives your registration form, we will send you an **invoice** with instructions to pay the **deposit**.



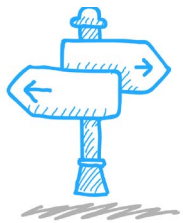
If you'd like to purchase **trip insurance**, we suggest Travelex. For more info, call them at 800-228-9792 or visit www.travelex.com and refer to location number 32-0704.



Four to six weeks before the tour **we will mail you a packet** with a packing list, traveler directory and other useful info.



Make sure you know where your **passport** is now! For travel to Norway it should be valid for six months beyond your return date.



Onward Travel's cancellation policy in a nutshell:

- \$250 of your initial deposit is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 90 days and the full deposit is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 60 days and 50% of total trip fee is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 30 days and the full trip fee is nonrefundable

See the full [Terms & Conditions](http://www.onwardtravel.co/terms) at www.onwardtravel.co/terms

Register now!

Visit onwardtravel.co to complete the registration form and submit payment.

Space is limited to only 14 travelers.

\$1,500 deposit due upon booking, balance due by April 15, 2024.



Get in Touch!

Contact Onward Travel with questions or special requests:
letsgo@onwardtravel.co
845-293-2729

