

## Norway: Bergen & the Fjords

### Tour-Only Itinerary

Welcome to Norway—and an enlightening and idyllic fjords walking tour. Your journey takes you from the breathtaking fjords of the country's spectacular west coast to the mountaintops and valleys of its equally scenic interior. When not walking, you'll travel by coach, RIB boat, ferry, and train—including the celebrated Flam Railway. Along the way, you'll visit a stately manor and its gardens, perambulate a pristine lake, view the untamed beauty of the Flåmsdalen Valley, see historic wooden villages and a well-preserved stave church, and explore Bergen's historic Bryggen district. You'll also touch modern culture with tastings of goat cheese and cider, as well as the opportunities to mingle with locals that a walking tour allows. Let us show you the essence of Norway, then and now.



### Highlights

- Walk the historic and breathtaking Vindhella section of the King's Road hiking trail, a curvaceous path that winds toward the beautifully preserved Borgund Stave Church.
- Travel by coach, ferry, RIB boat, and train on scenic rides that include the renowned Flam railway, the Aurlandsfjellet National Tourist Route, and the Nærøyfjord.
- Learn about cider production on the Hardanger Fruit Trail and enjoy a tasting, followed by a delicious lunch overlooking a fjord.
- Ferry to the historic Rosendal Barony to admire its famous rose garden and view a landscape of fjords, glaciers, mountains, and waterfalls.
- Spend two nights at a cozy boutique hotel in Lærdalsøyri, named a national "heritage village" for its cluster of 18th-century wooden houses.

## On all Fully-Guided Adventures you can count on ...



Expert local guides to introduce you to the best of your destination.



Gracious accommodations that are a clean, comfortable home away from home.



Off-the-beaten-path places you'd never find on your own.



Experts to handle all the details.



A maximum of 18 fun-loving fellow travelers to share the journey.



Air Packages include plane tickets, airport car service, and pre- and post-tour accommodations.



Delicious, authentic multi-course meals—virtually all are included.

## Activity Level

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with an average of 4–6 miles per day. The terrain varies from paved and cobblestone streets (during organized city tours and easy village explorations) to country roads, wide grassy trails, and uneven single-track hiking paths with loose stones, gravel, rocks, and roots. Footpaths and trails may be wet and muddy due to rain or melting snow, which can increase difficulty. Daily ascents and descents are mostly gradual, though some sections are steep. The hikes to the Hovden viewpoint, on the Rallarvegen, along the King's Road, and on Mt. Prest include elevation gains and/or losses of 850 feet or more. A few walks can be shortened or extended for the entire group; however, in general, there are limited alternative route options available. This tour

includes travel by ferry, railway, and RIB boat, as well as drives along scenic but winding mountain roads and through tunnels. Those prone to motion sickness should take appropriate precautions. Throughout the itinerary, Norway's rich history and traditions are beautifully framed by its dramatic mountain and fjord landscapes.

## DAY 1

### Your Country Walkers Vacation Begins

*Rosendal Baroniet; 2–3 miles, easy with moderate sections. Bondhusvatnet, 3 miles, easy*

Meet your Country Walkers leaders and group at 8:15 a.m. in the lobby of our pre-tour hotel in Bergen, the Clarion Hotel Admiral. Please be dressed for walking—comfortable, weather-appropriate attire, sturdy footwear, and a daypack (to carry essentials such as rain gear and a water bottle) are required.

Your Norwegian discoveries begin with a two-hour ferry ride to the picturesque village of Rosendal, where you visit the historic Baroniet Rosendal (Rosendal Barony). Originally a farm gifted as a wedding present to a wealthy Norwegian heiress and her Danish husband, the estate was developed into an elegant manor house completed in 1665. Set amid a landscape of fjords, glaciers, mountains, and waterfalls, this remarkable site reflects more than 250 years of history, with architectural and cultural influences from every era. From the ferry port, enjoy a pleasant walk to the estate and stroll its grounds—perhaps pausing to admire the renowned rose garden. Afterward, savor an included lunch in the farmhouse.

From Rosendal, a scenic drive brings you to Lake Bondhus, nestled in a valley formed by retreating glaciers. The massive Bondhusbreen Glacier, visible from the lake's outlet, has drawn visitors since the 19th century. As you hike along the lake's edge, take in the view of turquoise waters ringed by jagged peaks and the sound of waterfalls cascading down steep slopes.

Later, shuttle to your hotel, where you'll get better acquainted with your fellow travelers over a three-course welcome dinner.

**Included Meals:** Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 2

## Sørfjord

*Elvadalen Valley; 4 miles, easy to moderate, 600-ft. gain/loss OR Hovden; 4 miles, moderate with difficult sections, 1,500-ft. elevation gain/loss*

This morning's hike begins on a section of the Hardanger Fruit Trail, which winds through Norway's largest fruit-growing region—home to more than half a million trees. As you amble past farms and fragrant orchards, signposts along the way share insights into the region's fruit production and rich agricultural history.

Formed millennia ago by retreating glaciers, Norway's fjords are revered for their pristine waters and steep, rugged mountains. Today, enjoy an easy walk through a valley ringed by craggy peaks and laced with cascading waterfalls and streams. For those seeking more of a challenge, a longer trail leads uphill to a scenic viewpoint offering sweeping fjord vistas.

Today's included lunch overlooks the Sørfjord and features a tasting of locally produced cider, along with a delicious meal highlighting regional ingredients.

Back at your hotel, enjoy time at leisure to take advantage of its many amenities. You might swim through the channel linking the heated indoor and outdoor pools, relax in the Jacuzzi or sauna, stroll the private beach, or simply unwind in a lounge chair and admire views of the fjord and the distant Folgefonna Glacier.

Dinner is on your own tonight. You may wish to sample traditional Norwegian cuisine at the hotel's restaurant or bar, or ask your leaders for recommendations in the village. Please note: dining options and hours may be limited this evening.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 3

### Flåmsdalen Valley. Travel to Lærdalsøyri

*Rallarvegen; 5 miles, easy with moderate sections, 1,560-ft. elevation loss. Laerdal town walk; 1 mile, easy*

Known as Norway's extreme sports capital, the town of Voss awaits you this morning. After breakfast, board a motorcoach for an hour's drive to this region of untamed beauty. Upon arrival at the Voss Folk Museum, enjoy a guided tour of its remarkably preserved collection of two historic farmsteads, protected since 1928. You'll have time to explore both the outdoor farm museum and the indoor exhibits, which detail daily life in this Norwegian town over the past 500 years.

Next, board a train for a one-hour ride to Myrdal, the gateway to the Flåmsdalen Valley. Here, begin your walk along the Rallarvegen, or "Navvies' Road," named for the railway construction workers who once built the Bergen Line. This scenic path begins with a moderately steep descent featuring 21 hairpin turns—your guides will set a relaxed pace for this section. Adventurous travelers may opt to skip the walk and take a thrilling zipline ride to the valley floor (available at your own cost and subject to availability).

Whether on foot or by zipline, you'll descend into the breathtaking Flåm Valley, with sweeping views of mountains, cascading waterfalls, and the Moldåni River. Pause with your group to enjoy a packed lunch amid the stunning scenery. Along the way, you may even spot a curious goat wandering from one of the many local farms.

Later, continue by motorcoach (approximately one hour) to Lærdalsøyri, your home for the next two nights. Along the way, you'll travel through the Lærdal Tunnel—completed in 2000, it is the longest road tunnel in the world at 15.2 miles.

Upon arrival in Lærdalsøyri—a designated national heritage village known for its well-preserved 18th-century wooden houses—check into your hotel. Before dinner with your travel companions, join your leaders for an optional short walking tour of the charming town.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 4

### King's Road

*Galdane to Husum; 5 OR 3 miles, easy to moderate. Vindhellavegen; 1 mile, moderate, 600-ft elevation gain*

Built in 1790, the King's Road was the first route linking Oslo (then Christiania) and Bergen. Stretching 62 miles over Filefjell—a mountainous region between Lærdal and Valdres in southern Norway—it has since been restored as a hiking trail rich with scenic overlooks and cultural heritage sites. In 2014, it was named "Norway's Most Beautiful Road" by the Norwegian Public Roads Administration.

Country Walkers is proud to support Kongevegen over Filefjell with a donation on behalf of each guest on this tour. This nonprofit organization works to revitalize and maintain the historic King's Road.

This morning, a 20-minute shuttle brings you to the trail, where you meet a local guide for a hike along the Galdane path, which traces the rushing River Lærdalselvi. With its location on the east/west climate divide, this stretch is celebrated for its remarkable scenic diversity. As you walk, admire dramatic landscapes of boulder-strewn riverbanks, steep cliffs, and rare plant species.

Continue your hike along the Øygardsvegen path, passing ancient stone bridges, traditional farms, historic inns, and even Iron Age burial sites. Midday, break for lunch at a charming family-run hotel that has welcomed travelers on the King's Road since 1835. For those seeking a shorter option, approximately two miles of today's walk may be skipped with support from the bus.

Your final stretch takes you along the dramatic curves of Vindhellavegen, a breathtakingly scenic section of the trail that leads to the Borgund Stave Church. Built in 1190, this remarkably preserved structure is considered the finest example of Norway's traditional stave churches. Enjoy a guided tour of the church and explore the Visitors' Center across the road.

Your discoveries conclude with a return shuttle to your hotel. The rest of the afternoon and evening are free. Perhaps explore town highlights like the Sogn Art Center or the Norwegian Wild Salmon Center. For dinner, you may choose to dine at the hotel or select from local restaurants nearby.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 5

### Aurland

*Mt. Prest; 1-3 miles, easy-moderate, 850-ft. elevation gain/loss. Otternes farmyard; 1-2 miles, easy.  
Farm hike; 1 mile, easy*



Start your morning with a Norwegian hiking tradition: making a *matpakke* (packed lunch) from the hotel's breakfast buffet. Choose from an enticing selection of cheese, meat, fish, and hearty bread to create a satisfying sandwich for the day ahead.

A barren yet beautiful landscape flanks the Aurlandsfjellet, one of the most scenic routes in this highly photogenic country. Known as the "Snow Road" for its year-round snowfields, it features a dramatic series of 20 hairpin turns that reveal ever-changing views—from desolate plateaus to towering mountains. Travel this iconic route this morning, taking in sweeping fjord vistas and stark alpine plains.

Disembark at Mt. Prest, where your leaders will select a hiking route based on weather, trail conditions, and group fitness level. As you trek, enjoy breathtaking panoramic views of the Aurlandsfjord, cradled in rugged mountains. Continue through a tranquil pine forest and descend to the Stegastein viewpoint—a striking architectural platform jutting 2,000 feet above the fjord.

Time permitting, stop in the charming village of Aurlandsvangen, known for its natural beauty and cultural heritage. Once a hub for mid-20th-century hunters and fishers, today it attracts nature lovers and artisans. Perhaps visit the local glassblowing studio or the Aurland shoe factory—birthplace of the original penny loafer.

Next, take a short walk to Otternes Farm, a preserved 17th-century hill farm of 27 historic buildings, each with its own distinct function. Explore the grounds and enjoy your *matpakke* lunch while soaking in awe-inspiring views of the Sognefjord. Then, enjoy a leisurely walk along the fjord into Flåm.

Later in the afternoon, your leaders may offer an additional walk at a local farm before a short shuttle brings you to your hotel. The remainder of the day is at leisure. You might explore the Flåm Railway Museum to learn about the engineering marvel you experienced earlier, unwind at the floating fjordside sauna, or sample craft brews at the local Aegir Brewery. If you're feeling adventurous, consider an optional guided kayak tour (at your own expense), or pick up a walking map at the visitor center for easy self-guided strolls from town.

This evening, enjoy dinner at your leisure. Choose from town favorites such as Flåm Marina, Fretheim Hotel, and Aegir Brewpub—or take the evening bus to the nearby "Viking village" of Gudvangen, where

multiple dining options await.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 6

### Nærøyfjord and Aurlandsfjord

*Old Postal Road; 3 miles, easy to moderate. Undredal Village; 1 mile, easy*

Your early start this morning is rewarded with a thrilling ride aboard a RIB (rigid inflatable boat), offering a unique perspective of the Aurlandsfjord. Glide past charming villages along the shoreline, marvel at the cascading Sagfossen waterfall, and take in views of the majestic Nærøyfjord—one of only two Norwegian fjords designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site for their “exceptional natural beauty.”

After your exhilarating boat ride, set off on a scenic walk along the historic Old Postal Route from Styvi to Bleiklindi—named for a centuries-old linden tree. Before the arrival of steamships, this route was vital for delivering mail when the fjord froze in winter. Panoramic views of the dramatic Nærøyfjord accompany you as you walk through this protected landscape.

From Bleiklindi, enjoy a short boat ride to the remote hamlet of Bakka, then continue by motorcoach to the village of Undredal, renowned for its brown and white goat cheese. Learn about the history and production of this local delicacy during a tasting, followed by an included lunch. Afterwards, stretch your legs on a guided stroll through the village to visit Norway’s smallest stave church.

Return to your hotel by a 25-minute shuttle, and enjoy time to relax before gathering with your fellow travelers this evening for a festive farewell dinner—an opportunity to reflect on your unforgettable Norwegian adventure.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 7

### Travel to Bergen. Your Country Walkers Vacation Ends

*Bryggen city tour; 1–2 miles, easy*



This morning, embark on a breathtaking ride aboard the famed Flåm Railway. Constructed between 1923 and 1940 to link Bergen and Oslo, this engineering marvel of the 20th century now offers travelers an unforgettable window into the splendor of Norway's unspoiled interior.

Settle into a vintage railcar for the scenic 50-minute journey. As the train ascends through a narrow valley, a stunning landscape unfolds: rivers winding through deep gorges, waterfalls tumbling from snowcapped peaks, and hardy vegetation clinging to rocky slopes. At the mountain station of Myrdal, your group disembarks to change trains and continue the journey westward to Bergen (approximately two hours).

Once the capital of the Kingdom of Norway, Bergen is one of the oldest port cities in Northern Europe. In the Middle Ages, it served as a major trading hub for the Hanseatic League. Today, remnants of this storied past can be found in Bryggen (the Quay), a UNESCO World Heritage site. The colorful wooden buildings lining the harbor have been restored and preserved, showcasing the historic charm and traditional architecture of the era.

Upon arrival, enjoy a brief guided tour of Bryggen before continuing on foot to the Clarion Hotel Admiral, where your *Norway: Bergen & the Fjords* tour concludes in the early afternoon (approximately 1:30 p.m.). Bid farewell to your travel companions and depart at your leisure for onward travels.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## What's Included

### Tour Only

### Air Package

Exceptional boutique accommodations	✓	✓
15 on-tour meals: 6 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 3 dinners	✓	✓
Local leaders with you throughout tour	✓	✓
Local wine and/or beer with dinner	✓	✓
Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary	✓	✓
Telescopic walking sticks provided on tour	✓	✓
Roundtrip airfare		✓
Two extra nights in Bergen		✓
Airport arrival and departure transportation		✓
Pre- and post-trip breakfasts		✓
Business-class upgrades available		✓