

The Lofoten Islands and Lappland



DAY 1 ARRIVAL BODØ

Nov 7 Meet and greet at the Bodø airport. Transfer by bus to the hotel.
Dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight at the Skagen Hotel.

DAY 2 BODØ - SVOLVÆR - HENNINGSVÆR (LOFOTEN)

Nov 8 Depart after an early breakfast by bus towards Kjerringøy. A ferry will bring you over to the island.

Arrive at the Kjerringøy Old Trading Post 40 km north of Bodø. It consists of 15 well-preserved old houses, with most furnishings intact, and makes up one of Norway's most important and charming architectural monuments from the end of the 19th century. The local guide will give vivid descriptions of the everyday life of the upper class and their servants in this north-Norwegian coastal culture during the late 1800's. The famous author Knut Hamsun visited Kjerringøy in 1879 and found inspiration and encouragement for his writing. Hear the guides explain how several of Hamsun's novels were dramatised and filmed here.

Return to Bodø in time for lunch at the hotel.

Then transfer by bus to the pier.

In the afternoon departure from Svolvær on the Hurtigruten ship. Cross the Vestfjord and see the 100 km long Lofoten mountain range rising from the sea - a seemingly solid, jagged mountain range which shelters the many fishing stations from the sea to the west. Lofoten is a group of islands stretching from the mainland into the ocean where the warm Gulf Stream meets the arctic current, creating the world's best breeding ground for cod. The cod comes here in incredible numbers, making fishing the main industry in Lofoten and cod perhaps the most important fish in Norwegian history.

Dinner onboard the ship before arriving in Svolvær. Transfer by private motorcoach from Svolvær to the nearby fishing village Henningsvær.

Henningsvær is a charming and lively, as well as the largest, fishing village situated at the foot of Mount Vågakaillen and consists of a group of islets. Check-in at the Henningsvær Bryggehotelet for a three night stay. The hotel is situated on the quayside surrounded by fishermen's cabins and the local fish market. Let the seagulls outside your window wake you in the mornings - instead of a call from the reception.

DAY 3 LOFOTEN

Nov 9 Start early with a 30-60 minute briefing/presentation about the killer whale (by a scientist/marine biologist) followed by a safari. Go out by boat together with your guide. Lunch is brought along onboard the boat - as well as hot chocolate, coffee, tea and crackers. Warm thermal suits are available for everyone.

The duration of the safari is apx 6 hours depending on the weather and where the whales are spotted.

Return to the hotel for a few hours relaxation. There are two hot tubs on the quay just outside the hotel.

Start the evening with a multimedia performance in the Gallery House of Lofoten (next door to the hotel). Strong, emotional, genuine motives taken in Lofoten throughout all four seasons. No words or text, just music and images put perfectly together. (Duration apx 18 minutes.)

The show is followed by champagne in the other rooms of the gallery. Admire Norwegian art from the romantic period around 1900.

Dinner at a place called "Trandamperiet" (an old cod liver refinery) with rustic furniture and an informal atmosphere.

DAY 4 LOFOTEN

Nov 10 Lofoten Seafood Theater from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm. Join a proper fishing boat with professional crew onboard. The previous day the crew have prepared a fishing net called "line" in the sea, so now the catch of the day is pulled out of the sea. Those who wish may also attempt to fish with the traditional fishing gear "jukse".
Back at the fish landing we learn more about the fishing traditions in Lofoten, how to cut a filet out from the fish and about the various fishing processes. Have a taste of cod liver oil and pure stock fish...
Lunch break around 12:30 pm.
The afternoon is free with time to relax or stroll around the fishing village of Henningsvær. Dinner is served at Finnholmen Brygge - a five course meal based on the catch of the day.

DAY 5 HENNINGSVÆR - NORWEGIAN COASTAL VOYAGE (DEPARTURE 22:00)

Nov 11 Sightseeing by motor coach around the islands. Arrive at the Lofotr Viking Museum. Enjoy a 3-course viking meal in a full size reconstruction of a house from the Viking era while a vocal group entertains with songs from the Medeval period. Prepare to eat like the Vikings, without a fork, just a rough knife and a spoon - and listen to the chieftain tell exciting Viking tales.
Enjoy some more sightseeing after lunch followed by some free time in the town of Svolvær. Meet up at Magic Ice, the world's first Ice Gallery and bar! A refreshment is served among sculptures and installations made of ice, dramatically lit and presented together with sound, music and images.
The magical adventure is followed by a culinary treat at the Du Verden Restaurant, run by Roy Magne Berglund, member of the Norwegian national chef team and Chef of the Year in 2004.
Depart from Svolvær in the late evening on the Norwegian Coastal Voyage. Spend three nights onboard and enjoy a genuine, friendly and unpretentious voyage along Norway's beautiful coastline.

DAY 6 NORWEGIAN COASTAL VOYAGE (TROMSØ 14:30-18:30)

Nov 12 Breakfast onboard the ship. From the town of Harstad sail across the Vågsfjord towards the narrower Tranøyfjord. Sail under the Gisundbrua Bridge linking Senja - Norway's second largest island - to the mainland. Continue northwards and pass the old trading post of Gibostad to the west and Lenvik church to the east. Then sail out into the Malangfjord and towards the Kvaløya Island and further through Rystraumen before catching sight of Tromsø. Situated at 70 degrees north, Tromsø still has a mild climate. It was from here that Nansen, Amundsen, Nobile and Andrée set off on their polar expeditions giving the city one of its nick names; The Gateway to the Arctic.
Have lunch onboard before getting off the ship to have a closer look at Tromsø. A private motorcoach and a local guide will give you a panoramic tour of the city including (summer only) a ride with the cable car. It takes you up to "Storsteinen" (420 meters above sea level) where there is a fantastic view overlooking the town and the surrounding mountains. Pay a visit to the Mack Brewery - the northernmost brewery in the world - and enjoy a guided tour including a taste of the local beer or cider.
There will also be time to stroll around on your own before boarding the ship leaving at six-thirty.
Sail further on in the shelter of the large islands of Reinøy, Vanna and Arnøy to the west while there is a view of the Lyngen Alps with its mountain peaks rising 1833 meters directly up from the fjord to the east.

DAY 7 NORWEGIAN COASTAL VOYAGE (HONNINGSVÅG 11:45 - 15:15)

Nov 13 Those who are up at the crack of dawn will be able to enjoy the departure from Hammerfest, Europe's northernmost town. Sail for a couple of hours across open sea through the Rolvsøysund sound, a short stop at Havøysund, onwards through the Magerøysund and then to Honningsvåg. Thanks to its excellent sheltered harbour, Honningsvåg has become a major fishing port and the capital of the North Cape region. About 4000-5000 ships call here each year.
Travel by bus from the pier in Honningsvåg to the North Cape - the cliff rising 307 meters out of the North Atlantic Ocean on the utmost point of Europe.
Back on the ship at three in the afternoon continue the journey across the Porsangerfjord. Observe the world's largest bird cliff at Sværholtklubb on the starboard side. Round the

Kinnarodden headland, the most northerly point of mainland Europe, continue via Mehamn and Berlevåg and then sail throughout the night along the northern coast via towns of Vardø and Vadsø finally reaching Kirkenes the next morning.

DAY 8 NORWEGIAN COASTAL VOYAGE (ARRIVAL KIRKENES 10:00)

Nov 14 Arrive in Kirkenes and disembark the ship. Transfer from the pier to the hotel to drop off the luggage. The town of Kirkenes is located in the Barents region 70 degrees north and 30 degrees east with borders to both Russia and Finland. Ice free ports give access to the Barents sea all year round.

Transfer to the Gabba Reindeer Safari Park. Meet the reindeers. Feed them, take pictures of them and learn about their purpose up here in the north. Arctic Salmon Soup and cake is served in a lavvo restaurant.

After lunch transfer to the Andersgrotta bombshelter - a huge cave in the mountain in the very center of Kirkenes. During WW2 Kirkenes, being one of Europe's most strategic points, was bombed and destroyed by more than 300 air attacks and more than 1000 alarms. A guided tour and a 9 minute video shows how this bombing affected the civilians.

Then pay a visit to a Russian trawler in the Kirkenes harbor. The visit includes a welcome by the captain and his crew and a nice cup of Russian tea.

Return to the hotel and enjoy some leisure time before dinner.

In the evening transfer by coach to the Neiden Lodge on the bank of the Neiden river - just 5km from Finland. It opened in 1876 and was (and still is) used by reindeer herdsman. Enjoy some sami culture and a tasteful dinner by the fire. The menu is sautéed reindeer with potatoes and then a delicious dessert with cloudberry.

Return to the hotel and stay overnight at the Rica Arctic Hotel.

DAY 9 KIRKENES

Nov 15 Drive by bus to experience the life near the Russian border. Then continue onboard a Zodiac rib boat into the Jarfjordbotn. On the way out to the Barents Sea you see some of the most beautiful scenery of the wild arctic. Watch a diver catch the giant King Crab. The crab can grow to the size of 12 kilos with a span of two meters. Eat the delicacy while learning more about the life of this enormous and exotic sea animal.

Return to Kirkenes by bus.

In the evening walk to nearby Vin & Vilt for a delicious and memorable meal in Kirkenes' best gourmet restaurant.

DAY 10 DEPARTURE KIRKENES

Nov 16 Breakfast at the hotel. Free until departure. Transfer by private motorcoach from the hotel to the airport.