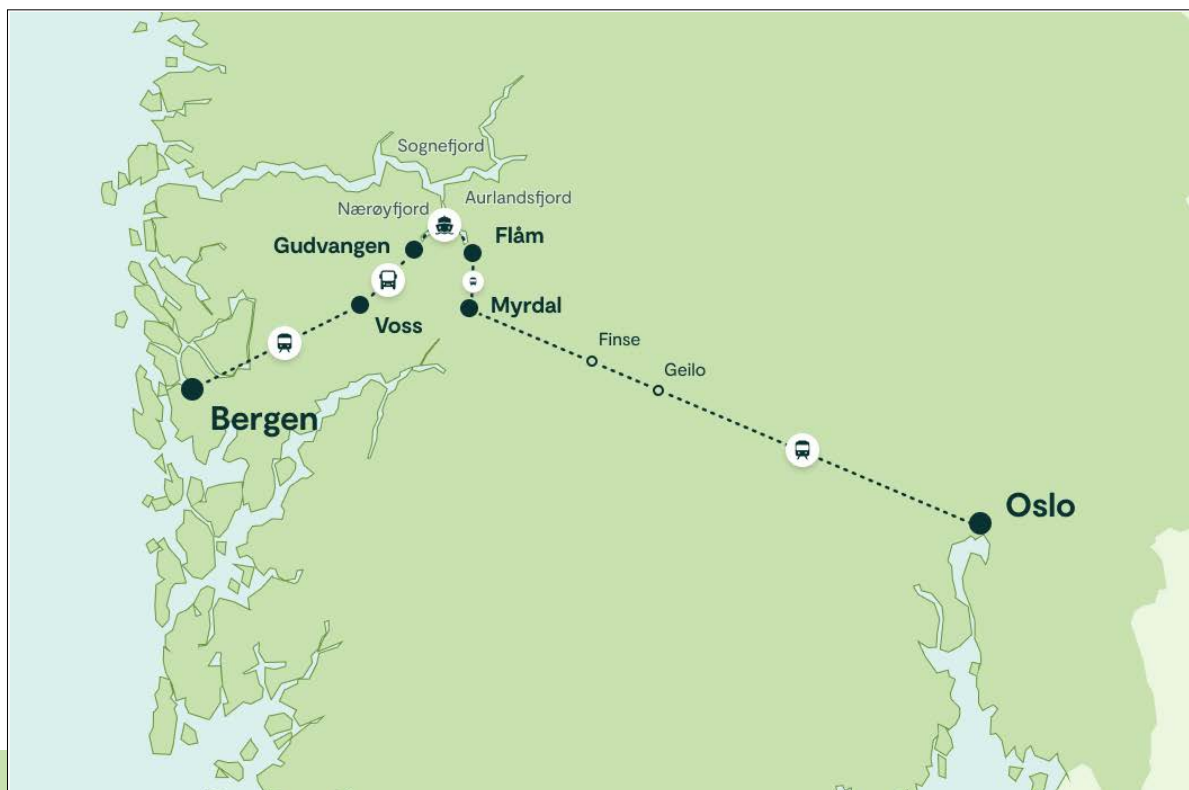
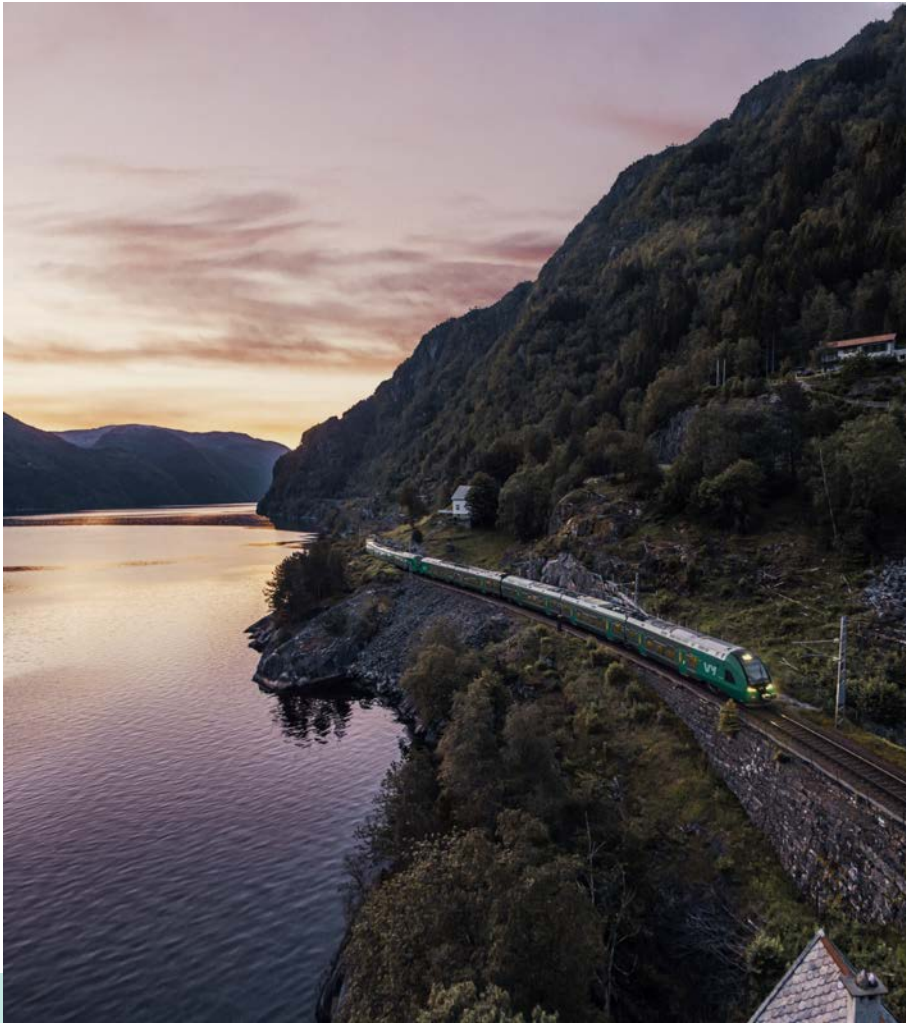




Norway in a Nutshell®



Read about the destinations and highlights you will experience during your tour! Your travel route, and itinerary are specified in your ticket and travel plan. Transport connections are specified in the Travel Information document which is enclosed together with your tickets.



Scenic train journeys - The Bergen Railway

The Bergen Railway runs between Oslo and Bergen and has been named “one of the best train journeys in the world” by Lonely Planet. The construction of the Bergen Railway was a huge project in its day and was completed in 1909. The railway line is Northern Europe's highest stretch of railway, roughly 100 km of which runs through wild mountain terrain.

On journeys from Oslo, you pass areas of open countryside and wooded valleys before crossing the Hardangervidda Mountain Plateau to arrive at the exciting fjord areas of Western Norway.

The railway line crosses Northern Europe's biggest mountain plateau, **Hardangervidda**. The mountain plateau is located above the alpine tree line and has a distinctively and fascinating alpine climate!

All over Hardangervidda you will see cabins dotted around, some are basic while others are like small castles with all the modern comfort needed. Since people in Norway are keen on skiing and hiking, lots of Norwegians spend a lot of time (and money) on mountain cabins where they can relax and spend their leisure time.

From the train window you will also be able to spot the Hardangerjøkulen glacier, 1863 meters above sea level. This is a popular destination for skiers and glacier hikers. A yearly tradition that takes place here, is the National Day procession on May 17th from Finse to the Hardangerjøkulen. This is a parade that consists exclusively of skiers, many of them wearing the Norwegian National costume “Bunad”.

If you see bikers close to the railway track, they are most likely heading on to Finse and Flåm on the historical **Rallarvegen**, one of Norway's most beautiful bicycle routes.

The Rallarvegen road was originally built as a work road during the construction of the Bergen railway and "Rallar" was the name of the work force which later gave the name to this famous construction road. Today Rallarvegen is one of the most popular and scenic bicycle trails in the country.

The highest point on the Bergen Railway is Finse train station at 1,222 metres above sea level. Finse is only reachable by train, foot or by bike and few places in Norway offer mightier nature experiences.

Finse has also been used as location in the Star Wars film “The Empire strikes back” from 1979. The raw mountain scenery and cold weather conditions made Finse perfect as the planet “Hoth” in this epic movie.

Your ride with the Bergen Railway is a comfortable and relaxing experience where you can enjoy the changing landscapes outside your window. You will see everything from green valleys, high mountains and glaciers to beautiful fjords.

The Bergen Railway connects to the spectacular Flåmsbana at Myrdal station.



Scenic train journeys - The Flåm Railway

Flåmsbana, or the Flåm Railway, is considered one of the most scenic train rides in the world. The Flåm Railway is a masterpiece of engineering that took over 20 years to build, has 20 tunnels and is 20 kilometres long. Trial operation started in 1940 with small steam locomotives, and the line was fully electrified in 1944. The Flåm Railway is Northern Europe's steepest railway and 18 of the line's 20 tunnels were built by hand!

The Flåm railway was built to connect Sogn and Fjordane county to the rest of the railway network in Norway, thereby improving communications in the innermost part of the country.

In order to manage the great difference in altitude from the mountain plateau down to Flåm valley, the train will make a 180 degree turn inside the mountain! A couple of minutes from Flåm, you will be able to see the Flåm valley through an opening in the rock face. You get a similar view after exiting the hairpin tunnel.

During your train ride either up or down the Flåmsdalen Valley, you will see rivers cutting through deep ravines, waterfalls tumbling down the mountain sides and small farms dotted along the rail track.

The Flåm valley is a typical Western Norwegian fjord valley because it is a continuation of the Aurlandsfjord and ends in a steep mountainside at the Kjosfossen waterfall. It is a U-shaped valley created by a glacier on which glacial rivers and ice erosion have made their mark.

The journey between the mountain station Myrdal and the fjord village Flåm takes approx. 1 hour. Midway, the train journey includes a 5-minute photo stop at the spectacular Kjosfossen waterfall.



Fjord Villages Flåm

Flåm is the end station of the Flåmsbana and sits innermost in the Aurlandsfjord, a branch of the amazing Sognefjord and right in the heart of Fjord Norway.

This charming fjord village has been welcoming tourists for nearly 200 years, so Flåm knows a thing or two about hospitality. Flåm is the perfect starting point for exploring some of the most spectacular natural attractions in Norway, with its wide variety of things to do.

On your stop in Flåm, you can enjoy the gorgeous fjord scenery, taste the local cuisine, or join in on some fun activities. You can explore the UNESCO Nærøyfjord by RIB-boat or in a kayak, or get a birds-eye view of the Aurlandsfjord on a sightseeing tour to Stegastein viewpoint.

If hunger hits, visit one of the several restaurants, or stop by Flåm Bakery to try the famous "Kanelbolle" – a delicious local cinnamon pastry. In Flåm you will also find Ægir Brewery, a modern craft brewery where they create their own twists on well-known beer styles and testing new flavours and ideas.

Another attraction in the area is the famous Aurland Shoe factory, which today is the only remaining shoe factory in the country. There is an outlet in Flåm that sells the original penny loafer shoe, and we recommend stopping by the shop to check out the footwear and perhaps even get your own pair.

Fun fact: The Aurland shoes has a built in 10 cent coin! This is a tribute to all who donated 10 cents to the factory when it was struggling economically.

If you have some extra time in Flåm, we recommend a **hiking trip to Brekkefossen waterfall**. The hiking trip starts from Flåm centre on an asphalt road up the valley alongside the Flåm river. After 1,5 km in easy terrain, you continue up the mountain side to the Brekke Waterfall platform.

The rocky and steep trail quickly gains elevation and soon the small city of Flåm is visible through the trees. After about 30 minutes uphill hiking, the trail opens up on a grassy ledge, offering beautiful views of the area.

The hiking trip takes about 2,5 – 3 hours, is a total of 5 km in length and has an elevation of about 155 m.

Fjord Villages Gudvangen

Beautifully situated at the head of the Nærøyfjord you will find Gudvangen. Gudvangen is an old Viking village with a lot of character and a myriad of adventures waiting to be discovered.

With its dramatic and spectacular scenery, Gudvangen has been a magnet for tourists for more than a century. One of them was the German Kaiser Wilhelm who came to Gudvangen several times in his private yacht.

Today it is the Viking Valley that attracts tourists from all over the world, as well as the beautiful UNESCO fjord landscape of course.

In addition to those seeking natural scenery, extreme sports athletes from all over the world come to Gudvangen every year in connection with the Extreme sport festival in Voss. The area around Gudvangen is known for being extraordinary for base jumping.

During your tour, you change between bus and boat at Gudvangen harbour.





The UNESCO Nærøyfjord

Electric fjord cruise between Flåm and Gudvangen

One of the big highlights on this tour is the fjord cruise on the UNESCO Nærøyfjord between Flåm and Gudvangen. The Nærøyfjord is the narrowest branch of the Sognefjord and with its steep mountainsides, hanging valleys, towering peaks, waterfalls and small hamlets, this fjord is perhaps the most outstanding natural attraction in Norway.

The Nærøyfjord is 20 km long, only 250 metres across at its narrowest point and a mere 12 metres at its shallowest. The surrounding mountains reach heights of 1,660 metres.

During your fjord cruise, you will be passing by the small fjord village of Undredal, a charming gem famous for its goat cheese production and its tiny church. Underdal church from 1147 has seating for only 40 persons and it is said to be the smallest church in Scandinavia.

On the side of the fjord 300 metres above sea level are the two farms at Stigen. Previously, people lived on both farms all year, but nowadays only one of them is inhabited, during the summer. The name of the farms comes from the ladders (or "stiger" in Norwegian) that had to be used to negotiate the steepest part on the path.

It is said that during the age when the church's men travelled around collecting taxes, the people at Stigen could see them approaching by boat on the fjord well in advance. They were quick to pull up the ladders to prevent the tax collectors from reaching the farms!

We recommend spending some time on deck on the boat to enjoy the silence and majestic views of the world heritage landscape surrounding you.

Keep an eye out for harbour porpoises and the round heads of the seals, which can often be seen bobbing up and down in the water.

Parts of the fjord cruise will be on the Aurlandsfjord, another small arm of the Sognefjord.



The Unesco Nærøydalen Nærøy Valley

On the scenic bus ride between Gudvangen and Voss you will drive through the beautiful Nærøydalen with the fantastic UNESCO landscape passing by outside your window.

The Nærøydalen is a typical fjord valley in that it is a continuation of a fjord that ends in a steep mountainside, in this case at Stalheim.

During your journey between Gudvangen and Voss you will pass by cascading waterfalls; foaming rivers and steep mountains.

When in Voss and if your schedule fits, we recommend you taking the Voss Gondola up to Hangurstoppen mountain. At the top, you will have great views of the mountain scenery around Voss, and here you will also find Voss' largest restaurant, famous for homemade dishes, based on local ingredients from several farms in and around Voss.

You can also take a stroll in Vangsgata, the main street in Voss. Right behind the church (which you will see from the train station), there is a small square, where the Vangsgata starts. Vangsgata has several cafes, restaurants and cozy shops.





Practical information



The Bergen Railway

- On the regional trains, you will have reserved seats. There is a coffee/bistro car serving breakfast, snacks, hot/cold drinks, lunch, dinner, beer/wine. There are toilet facilities in each car. The regional trains operates between Bergen and Oslo. Please note that some departures between Oslo and Bergen are operated by local trains.
- On the local trains you will have reserved seats. There are toilet facilities in the train. You will also find vending machines with hot/cold drinks. Local trains operates between Bergen and Voss/Myrdal.



The Flåm Railway

- The Flåm Railway offers standard class cars, free seating and video/audio guide service during the journey between Myrdal and Flåm. There are compartments for individuals and groups, as well as toilet facilities.



Electric fjord cruise

- The fjord cruise on Nærøyfjorden and Aurlandsfjorden is on a modern electric boat. There is a kiosk onboard serving hot/cold drinks and dishes, as well as beer and wine. There is a large viewing deck and comfortable seating with panorama windows. There are several toilet facilities on board.



Bus between Gudvangen and Voss

- The bus has comfortable seats and a modern design.
- There is luggage space to store your luggage.



Myrdal Station

- At Myrdal station you will find a small café serving hot/cold dishes, snacks, drinks, beer, and wine. The opening hours of the café vary throughout the year. There are also toilet facilities here.



Flåm

- In Flåm you will find cafeterias, restaurants, souvenir shops, a bakery, hotels, the Flåm Station ticket office and Flåm museum, which offers free entry. There are also several toilet facilities available.



Gudvangen

- In Gudvangen there is a restaurant, shops, a Viking Museum and toilet facilities available.



Voss

- In Voss, there are several different cafeterias, restaurants and shops. There are toilet facilities at the train station, or in the waiting rooms. If you have time, take a walk down Vangsgata, which is the main street in Voss. Right behind the church (which you will see from the train station), there is a small square, where the Vangsgata starts.

What to wear

Dress comfortably and according to the season you are traveling in. Also - check the weather forecast before you start your tour.

Regardless of what season you are traveling, we always recommend bringing some warm and windproof clothes, as it can get cold on the deck of the fjord cruise.

Also remember that if you are planning on joining in on an activity during the tour, be sure to bring suitable clothes.



fjordtours