Impossibly steep-sided fjords of stunning beauty cut through the jagged coastline of southern Norway. This guide helps you to plan a fjord expedition that involves all the best sites, walks and waterfalls.

**SIGHTS**

**Baroniet Rosendal**  
(Baroniet.no; Rosendal)  
Norway’s only baronial mansion dates back to 1665 and sits on a gentle rise above the town. The period interiors include a collection of tapestries, an intact library and beautiful examples of Meissen and Royal Danish porcelain. Outside there is a stunning Renaissance rose garden. Admission to the manor includes a guided tour, and in summer there are evening concerts.

**Borgund Stave Church**  
(stavechurch.com/en/borgund;  
Borgund)  
Some 20 miles southeast of Lærdalsøyri along the E16, this 12th-century stave church was raised beside one of the major trade routes between eastern and western Norway. Dedicated to St Andrew, it’s one of the best known, most photographed and certainly the best preserved of Norway’s stave churches. Its simple, inky interior and sublimely rustic altar are deeply moving. Beside it is the only free-standing medieval wooden bell tower remaining in Norway.

**Coast Museum**  
(kyst.museum.no; Brendayvegen)  
A catch-all museum covering the whole of Sogn og Fjordane county, this museum explores the coast in all its varied forms. One of the buildings is dedicated to fishing, with a model of a 20th-century fishing family’s home, as well as exhibits on the foundation of the island as a small herring trading post barely 150 years ago. Another part of the complex houses a collection of coastal boats.

**Hardanger Folk Museum**  
(hardangerogvossmuseum.no;  
Fergekai)  
This excellent open-air museum is a repository for the cultural heritage of the Hardanger region. Wander through its collection of historic homes, boats, shops, outhouses and a school, and explore exhibitions that document the exquisite local folk costume and embroidery, wedding rituals, the famed Hardanger fiddle and fiddle-making, fishing and orchard keeping. There’s also a café with home-baked cakes.

**Kannesteinen**  
(6700 Måleøy)  
A short drive about 6 miles west of town brings you to the bizarre – and much Instagrammed – rock formation, rising from the sea like the tail of a whale. It’s completely natural, but it looks for all the world like a piece of abstract sculpture.

**Kinn Island**  
(Flora municipality; visitnorway.com)  
If you’re on limited time, a visit to this little island is a great way of getting a flavour of the coastline around Florø. After a quick boat ride from the quay, you’re met by a guide on the island who takes you on a 40-minute walk up to see the island’s famous stone hurch, telling tales of the island and Florø’s fishing heritage on the way. The stone church, dating from the 12th century, is stunning.

**Kinsarvik Stone Church**  
(Ullensvang municipality)  
Built in around 1180, this is one of Norway’s oldest stone churches. It was restored in the 1960s; the walls still bear traces of lime-and-chalk paintings depicting Michael the Archangel weighing souls while the devil tries to tip the scales. According to local legend, the church was built by Scottish invaders on the site of an earlier stave church.

**Kjåsen Farm**  
(Eidfjord Municipality)  
Perched 600m above Eidfjord are two farms that were, until 1974, completely inaccessible by road. Until then, residents had no choice but to lug all their goods and supplies up the mountainside – a back-breaking task. (It’s said that one of the buildings took 30 years to build.) Nowadays it’s mainly visited by tourists for the absolutely breathtaking view.

**Norsk Oljemuseum**  
(norskolje.museum.no; Kjerringholmen)  
The prospect of an ‘oil museum’ may not sound promising. But this place is well worth visiting – steel-clad architecture and high-tech displays on the history of North Sea oil exploration.

**Refviksanden**  
(Vagsøy Municipality)  
Running for more a mile, this wonderful white-sand beach is one of the best places for a wild sea swim on the west coast – assuming you can handle the perennially chilly temperatures, that is. On a sunny day, it’s a glorious spot, but it’s a rare day indeed that there’s no wind. It’s about six miles’ drive from Maley; there’s a simple campsite near the beach with toilets and showers.

**Trolltunga**  
(Odda municipality)  
A slender spur of rock projecting into the void above Lake Ringedalsvatnet, Trolltunga is one of Norway’s most photographed features, and – along with Preikestolen – one of the country’s most popular hiking destinations. If you’re on limited time, a visit to this little island is a great way of getting a flavour of the coastline around Florø. After a quick boat ride from the quay, you’re met by a guide on the island who takes you on a 40-minute walk up to see the island’s famous stone church, telling tales of the island and Florø’s fishing heritage on the way. The stone church, dating from the 12th century, is stunning.

**Voringfossen waterfall**  
(Eidfjord Municipality)  
One of Norway’s most photographed features, and in summer there are evening concerts.

**Good to know**

Fonnafløy can put together a custom sightseeing trip in a helicopter – the aerial views over the fjords are once-in-a-lifetime stuff, but they don’t come cheap (fonnafløy.no).
activities around Odda. Their offers a huge range of high-thrill trolltunga-active.com) (00 47 908 24 572; Trolltunga Active steep, four-hour return hike from cliffs on three sides, Preikestolen 604m above the fjord, framed by emblematic images. Soaring rock formation is one of Norway's edge of this extraordinary granite The sight of people perched on the Preikestolen is an outstanding natural sight. The views are among the best in the country. Although the hike is not the easiest, it's definitely worth it. The Trolltunga walk is a must-do experience for everyone who visits Norway.

Preikestolen (Pulpit Rock) is one of the nation's most remarkable sights. It's a steep, four-hour return hike from Preikestolstana, offering breathtaking views of the Lysefjord and the surrounding countryside. The hike is a moderate level of difficulty and is suitable for most fitness levels. The path is well-marked and offers several viewpoints along the way. The reward at the end is a stunning panoramic view of the Lysefjord and the surrounding fjords.

Voringsfossen is a series of waterfalls located in the heart of Norway. The waterfall is the highest in Europe, standing at 705 meters above sea level. The waterfall is located in the Hardanger region and is one of the most visited waterfalls in Norway. The hike to Voringsfossen is not too challenging, but it does require some physical effort. The path is well-marked and offers several viewpoints along the way. The reward at the end is a stunning view of the waterfall and the surrounding landscape.

Hurtigruten Coastal Ferry

There are few better ways to drink in the scenery of the fjords than to hop aboard a Hurtigruten Coastal Ferry. The Hurtigruten coastal ferry, which has been plying the waters since 1894, is a trueNorwegian icon. Every day and every night of the year, there's at least one Hurtigruten boat shuttling along 3,200 miles of Norwegian coastline, stopping at 35 ports between Bergen and Kirkenes.

There are also three 'expedition' ships that voyage all the way to Svalbard and the high Arctic. It is also possible, of course, to book shorter legs, although you'll probably need to do this once you're in Norway, the Hurtigruten website makes it easy. Discounts depend on the type of cabin, which range from these without a view to supremely comfortable suites. It's possible to break up the trip with shore excursions, especially if you're travelling the entire route. Each of the excursions, which are organised by the shipping company, may only be available on either northbound or southbound routes – there are 24-hour northbound and 15 northbound excursions, although many are seasonal.

Options include city tours and cruises deep into the interior fjord network (such as Geirangerfjord, pictured above). You can also take a bus to Nordkapp (Europe's northernmost road-accessible point), or a trip to the Russian border from Kirkenes. Excursions in the Hurtigruten website carries a full list of international sales agents. You can also purchase tickets through Fjord Tours. Summer fares, which run from mid-April to mid-September, are considerably more expensive than winter prices. Prices depend on the type of cabin, which range from these without a view to supremely comfortable suites. It's possible to break up the trip with shore excursions, especially if you're travelling the entire route. Each of the excursions, which are organised by the shipping company, may only be available on either northbound or southbound routes – there are 24-hour northbound and 15 northbound excursions, although many are seasonal.

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Sleeping

**Eidfjord Gjestgiveri**  
Best for traditional atmosphere  
(ovre-eidfjord.com)  
You can't miss this handsome guesthouse, an old-fashioned, whitewashed, gabled beauty with a covered porch out front.

**Hotel Park**  
Best for city exploration  
(hotelpark.no)  
Two 19th-century townhouses make a welcoming place to stay in Bergen. The 33 rooms have quirky layouts and surprising design.

**Kinsarvik Camping**  
Best for family camping holidays  
(kinsarvikcamping.no)  
This simple, friendly place is right by the water's edge; if you have kids in tow, Mikkelparken’s waterslides are 500m away.

**Sandven Hotel**  
Best for fjord views  
(sandvenhotel.no)  
Loads of charm, expansive balconies and excellent views from the light, bright fjord-facing rooms with pale oak boiserie.

**Ullensvang Gjestheiem**  
Best value for money  
(ullensvang-gjestheheim.no)  
Clad in wood and dotted with little white windows, it’s cute as a button, and the rooms are decent value.

**Walaker Hotell**  
Best for vintage stays  
(walaker.com)  
This lemon-yellow hotel dates from 1640 (apart from the 1960s annexe). It’s a historical treasure, packed with lovely antiques.

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**FURTHER READING**

Our Norway guide (£15.99) has chapters on the Western Fjords and Bergen & the Southwestern fjords, which you can download separately for £2.99 each.