Tour Code
NK1

ADVENTURESABROAD

NORDIC EXPLORER

Nordic Splendour by Land, Sea & Rail

14 days

Created on: 17 Nov, 2026

Day 1 Arrive in Helsinki

Arrival in Helsinki, a vibrant city where modern design meets historic charm. This coastal capital is renowned for its stunning waterfront, world-class museums, and laid-back Nordic lifestyle.

Overnight in Helsinki.

Included Meal(s): Dinner

Day 2 Helsinki: City Tour

This morning we explore Helsinki's central districts on foot. The walking tour takes us through the historic centre, past the Presidential Palace, City Hall, and Parliament building. At Senate Square we see the Lutheran Cathedral, designed by Carl Ludvig Engel in the 1830s. The square's neoclassical buildings—all by Engel—represent Russia's effort to create an impressive capital for Finland after 1812. The Finns accepted the architecture but not the authority, preserving their language and identity through decades of Russian rule before independence in 1917.

We visit Temppeliaukio Church, a striking modern structure built directly into solid rock in 1969. The church's dome consists of copper and glass, allowing natural light to illuminate the rough-hewn stone walls. The space doubles as a concert hall, its acoustics enhanced by the natural rock surfaces.

The afternoon is free for independent exploration. Helsinki's compact size makes it easy to navigate on foot. The harbour market operates daily, selling fresh produce, fish, and handicrafts. Those interested in modern architecture might visit the Oodi Helsinki Library, completed in 2018, with a large public terrace on its roof offering views across the city.

Overnight in Helsinki.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 3 Free time in Helsinki / Ferry to Sweden

The morning is free to explore Helsinki independently. A popular option is the ferry to Suomenlinna, a sea fortress built across six islands starting in 1748 when Finland was part of Sweden. The fortress represents an outstanding example of 18th-century military architecture and is a UNESCO World Heritage site. The ferry departs from the Market Square every 15-20 minutes and takes about 15 minutes. Suomenlinna is best explored on foot at your own pace—your Tour Leader will provide directions during yesterday's tour.

This afternoon we board our overnight ferry to Stockholm. The vessels on this route feature restaurants, duty-free shops, and entertainment facilities. Our cabins have low beds (not bunks) and ensuite washrooms. Dinner is served on board as we cruise through the Stockholm archipelago.

Overnight ferry.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 4 Stockholm: Old Town & Vasa Museum

After our morning arrival in Stockholm, we check into our hotel and have a break before beginning our afternoon walking tour.

Stockholm occupies 14 islands where Lake Mälaren meets the Baltic Sea. We begin at Stockholm City Hall, completed in 1923, which has hosted the Nobel Prize banquet since 1930. The building represents a distinctly Nordic approach to civic pride: not a royal palace but a public building where elected officials work. The Blue Hall accommodates 1,300 guests for the annual banquet, while the Golden Hall's 18 million gold-mosaic tiles depict Swedish history through scenes of labour and industry alongside royal moments.

Crossing to Gamla Stan (Old Town), we walk cobblestone streets between buildings painted in ochre, rust, and gold tones. The Royal Palace dominates the waterfront with over 600 rooms. We pass St. Nicholas Church from the 13th century and Riddarholm Church, where Swedish monarchs have been buried since the 16th century.

From Gamla Stan we take a short ferry to Djurgården island for the Vasa Museum. The museum houses a 17th-century warship that sank on its maiden voyage in 1628. Salvaged in 1961, the Vasa is the world's only preserved 17th-century ship, standing 69 metres tall with its carved decorations remarkably intact.

After our visit, we return to the hotel by public transport.

Overnight in Stockholm.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 Stockholm: Boat Tour & Leisure Time

This morning we board a boat for a 50-minute tour through Stockholm's waterways. Departing near City Hall, the cruise winds through the channels between islands, offering views of the city from the water. We pass Kungsholmen island with its waterfront promenades, and the smaller islands of Langholmen and Reimersholme. The guide explains Stockholm's development from a 13th-century settlement controlling trade routes between Lake Malaren and the Baltic, to its current status as Sweden's capital and largest city.

The afternoon is free to explore Stockholm independently. The Old Town rewards further wandering, with shops, cafes, and galleries tucked along its lanes. Djurgarden island contains several museums and extensive parkland. The Kungstradgarden, a popular city park, often hosts outdoor events and concerts during summer.

Overnight in Stockholm.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6 Stockholm, Sweden - Fly to Copenhagen, Denmark

This morning we fly to Copenhagen, Denmark's capital. After arriving and checking into our hotel, we begin exploring the city.

We start with a one-hour canal cruise that provides an overview of Copenhagen's layout and landmarks. The boat glides through the historic harbour, past Amalienborg Palace where the Danish royal family resides, and Christiansborg Palace, which houses Denmark's parliament. The canals also reveal Copenhagen's maritime heritage—the city has been an important Baltic trading port since medieval times. We pass the Little Mermaid statue, created in 1913 and inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, sitting on a rock at the harbour entrance.

Overnight in Copenhagen.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7 Copenhagen: City Touring

This morning we walk through Copenhagen's historic centre, beginning at Nyhavn. This canal-side district, lined with 17th-century townhouses painted in bright colours, once served as the city's main commercial harbour. Hans Christian Andersen lived in several of these houses during his years in Copenhagen—you can visit the museum dedicated to his life during free time.

From Nyhavn we walk to Amalienborg Palace, the royal family's winter residence. Four identical Rococo palaces face an octagonal courtyard,

completed in the 1750s as mansions for noble families before becoming the royal residence after Christiansborg Palace burned in 1794.

We continue to Rosenborg Castle, built by King Christian IV in the early 17th century as a summer residence. The castle now houses the Danish crown jewels and royal regalia, including the crown used at coronations since 1671. The surrounding King's Garden provides a green space in the city centre, popular with locals during warm weather.

The afternoon is free. Copenhagen's National Museum, located in a former palace, contains extensive collections on Danish history and ethnography. The museum is free to enter and makes an excellent rainy-day option.

NOTE: The sequence of Copenhagen sightseeing may vary depending on weather, hotel location, and logistical considerations.

Overnight in Copenhagen.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 8 Copenhagen: City Tour - Overnight Ferry to Oslo

This morning we visit Christiansborg Palace, which houses Denmark's parliament, prime minister's office, and Supreme Court. The current palace, completed in 1928, stands on a site that has held a fortress or palace since 1167. The two previous buildings on this site both burned—in 1794 and 1884. We tour the Royal Reception Rooms, used for state functions and royal audiences, which showcase Danish craftsmanship in their tapestries, chandeliers, and furnishings.

If time permits before our ferry departure, you might visit the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, founded by beer magnate Carl Jacobsen. The museum contains significant collections of ancient Mediterranean art and 19th-century European painting and sculpture, housed in a building with a large winter garden at its centre.

This afternoon we board the evening ferry for the overnight journey to Oslo. The route crosses the Kattegat and Skagerrak straits between Denmark and Norway. Our cabins provide ensuite facilities and comfortable sleeping arrangements. The vessel includes restaurants, shops, and deck spaces for watching the coastline. Dinner is served on board.

Overnight ferry.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 9 Arrival in Oslo: City Touring

The final 90 minutes of the ferry journey offers excellent views as we enter Oslofjord. The ship passes Drøbak fortress and numerous islands with summer cottages before docking near Oslo's city centre. Our coach and guide will meet us at the terminal to begin sightseeing directly from the port.

We visit Vigeland Sculpture Park, the life work of Norwegian sculptor Gustav Vigeland (1869-1943). The park contains over 200 sculptures in bronze, granite, and wrought iron, all by Vigeland, arranged along a central axis. The Monolith, carved from a single piece of granite, rises 14 metres and depicts 121 human figures climbing toward the summit.

We continue to the Norwegian Folk Museum, an open-air collection of over 150 historic buildings relocated from across Norway. The museum includes urban houses, farm buildings, and the Gol Stave Church, a wooden church from around 1200 demonstrating medieval construction techniques. Buildings are arranged to show regional variations in Norwegian architecture and living conditions from the 16th through 19th centuries.

Our tour includes a stop at the Opera House, completed in 2008. The building's angled white roof slopes directly into the harbour, designed to be walked on as a public space. From the roof we have views across the harbour toward the city centre.

After checking into our hotel, the remainder of the day is free. The Karl Johans gate, Oslo's main street, connects the Royal Palace to the central station and contains shops, cafes, and the National Theatre.

NOTE: Hotel rooms will not be available when we dock in the morning. Large luggage remains secured on the coach while we tour; prepare a day-pack with items you'll need.

Overnight in Oslo.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10 Oslo: Area Sightseeing

This morning we walk to Oslo City Hall, completed in 1950. The building's main hall contains murals depicting Norway's history, industry, and culture. The Nobel Peace Prize ceremony takes place here each December.

From City Hall we take a short ferry to Bygdoy peninsula. We visit the Viking Ship Museum,* which houses three vessels excavated from burial mounds along Oslofjorden. The ships date to around 850 AD and provide the world's best-preserved examples of Viking Age shipbuilding. These ships once carried raiders who plundered European monasteries. A millennium later, their descendants established the Nobel Peace Prize -- the Nordic transformation in three museums over a thousand years.

We also visit the Fram Museum, which houses the ship used by Norwegian polar explorers Fridtjof Nansen and Roald Amundsen for Arctic and Antarctic expeditions between 1893 and 1912. The Kon-Tiki Museum displays the balsa raft Thor Heyerdahl sailed from Peru to Polynesia in 1947.

We return to central Oslo by public bus in time for lunch and a self-guided visit to the National Museum. The museum contains Norway's largest art collection, including Edvard Munch's "The Scream" (1893), along with works by other Norwegian and international artists.

* Please note that this museum may be closed for ongoing renovations through 2026. We regret if this closure impacts our visit.

Overnight in Oslo.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 11 Oslo - Flamsbana Railway - Gudvangen - Stalheim

An early departure takes us to Oslo's central station for the morning train to Myrdal, approximately a five-hour journey through southern Norway's mountain plateau. At Myrdal we transfer to the Flåm Railway for the descent to Flåm village.

The Flåm Railway descends 865 metres over 20 kilometres, an average gradient of 5.5%—one of the world's steepest standard-gauge railways. Construction began in 1923, with workers excavating 18 of the 20 tunnels by hand. The railway required seventeen years of hand-excavated labour to make Norway's fjords accessible to ordinary travellers. Norway chose to share its natural grandeur through public infrastructure rather than reserve it for the wealthy. The line opened in 1940. At Kjosfossen waterfall, the train stops for views and photos.

At Flåm we have time for lunch before boarding a two-hour fjord cruise. The boat travels along Aurlandsfjord and into Nærøyfjord, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Mountain walls rise 1,400 metres directly from the water, with waterfalls cascading down the cliffs. These fjords gave Norway its wealth—first through fishing, then shipping, now through oil extracted from the seabed beyond. The question wasn't whether the coastline would generate prosperity, but whether that prosperity would concentrate or distribute. Norway chose distribution.

At Gudvangen we board a coach for the journey to Stalheim.

Overnight in Stalheim.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 12 Stalheim - Train to Bergen

This morning we visit Stalheim Folk Museum, an open-air collection of 30 log buildings arranged to recreate a traditional Norwegian farm. The museum displays tools, household items, and crafts illustrating rural life in western Norway from the 17th through 19th centuries.

We continue by coach along a winding mountain road to Voss, a market town known as an outdoor activity centre. The route offers views of waterfalls and the steep Stalheimskleiva road.

From Voss we board the Bergen Railway for the journey to Bergen. This line, completed in 1909, crosses the mountain plateau between eastern and western Norway, reaching 1,237 metres at its highest point. Building a railway across a mountain plateau at these latitudes required enormous public investment for modest immediate return. Norway understood: infrastructure creates equality, connecting remote communities to coastal commerce.

Bergen, Norway's second-largest city, occupies a natural harbour surrounded by seven mountains. The city served as Norway's capital during the 12th and 13th centuries. Later, Hanseatic merchants from northern Germany established a major trading post here, dominating Bergen's commerce from the 14th to 18th centuries. The wooden warehouses from this period still line the harbour at Bryggen.

Overnight in Bergen.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 13 Bergen: City Tour

Our walking tour begins at Bryggen, the wharf where rows of wooden warehouses face Bergen's harbour. These gabled buildings mark the site of the Hanseatic merchants' quarter, established in 1360 when German traders monopolized Norway's dried cod trade. For four centuries, foreign merchants controlled Norway's greatest resource and hoarded the profits in these warehouses. The current structures date from after an 1702 fire, but the narrow passages still speak of monopoly and control.

Norway remembers this. When North Sea oil began flowing in the 1970s, the country faced a choice: concentrate wealth or distribute it. Norway's sovereign wealth fund—built on oil revenues—now exceeds $1.7 trillion, roughly $300,000 per Norwegian citizen. Not stored in warehouses for an elite, but invested to fund pensions, education, and healthcare for generations. Where Hanseatic merchants once hoarded, Norway chose to share.

We continue to Bergenhus fortress, which contains Hakon's Hall from the 1260s and Rosenkrantz Tower from the 1560s. Nearby stands St. Mary's Church, Bergen's oldest building from around 1130.

We take the Fløibanen funicular up Mount Fløyen, climbing 320 metres in seven minutes for panoramic views across Bergen's harbour and surrounding mountains.

The afternoon is free. The fish market near the harbour operates daily, selling fresh seafood.

Overnight in Bergen.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 14 Departure

Today we depart from Bergen, where Hanseatic warehouses still line a harbour that has generated wealth for eight centuries.

From Helsinki's Senate Square—where Finnish identity persisted through imperial architecture—to Stockholm's City Hall where Nobel banquets celebrate achievement over birthright, from Copenhagen's publicly-displayed crown jewels to Oslo's free sculpture parks, from the Flåm Railway that democratized fjord access to Bergen's oil-funded sovereign wealth: we've traced how Nordic nations turned maritime advantage into shared prosperity.

The Vikings raided. The Hanseatic merchants monopolized. The kings displayed. But modern Nordic countries chose democracy, infrastructure, and redistribution. Not perfect societies—no such thing exists—but societies that asked: 'How do we share what geography gave us?'

The answer stands visible across four capitals, museums, ferries, and one spectacular mountain railway: through democratic institutions, public investment, and the Nordic conviction that prosperity unused by all is prosperity wasted.

Bon voyage! Ha det bra!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast