

# Norwegian Ocean Cruises



Voringfoss waterfall

The world is full of wondrous, unusual places, shaped by the elements of nature and left untouched by humankind. Instead of heading for somewhere popular and more famous, try looking for those amazing sites that lie waiting for discovery.

The west coast of Norway is such a destination: formed by ancient glaciers, the coastline is something of a tribute to the terrestrial phenomenon of fjords. Narrow inlets characterized by sheer cliffs and awe-inspiring waterfalls, Norwegian fjords are jaw-dropping in scale and power, and the best way to see them is by taking one of the available ocean cruises.

Cruises leave regularly from Southampton and last about nine days or so. The itinerary includes stopovers at historical towns such as Bergen, Flam and Eidfjord, where excursions out to see other sites of interest can be arranged. This means there's the opportunity to see the world famous Flam railway, renowned for being one of the steepest railway lines in the world, and to experience Voringfoss, which at 600 feet is

Norway's most visited waterfall.

The towns themselves are quaint and well worth the visit. Flam has stunning views of the Norwegian wild and an excellent museum dedicated to its railway. Eidfjord is home to a power plant built into the side of a mountain and to Voringsfoss. Olden is one of the tiniest villages you could ever hope to see, but it's a very popular tourist destination due to the magnificent Briksdalsbreen glacier.

Bergen is the second-largest city in Norway, a cultural and commercial hub that's perfect for stretching those sea legs and picking up some interesting memorabilia. Passengers get close and personal with all aspects of Norway on this cruise and the opportunity to see some of the most gorgeous untouched nature in the world is one not to be missed.

Of course, the majority of time will be spent on board the cruise ship. Nine days can seem like a long time spent on a boat on paper, but in reality the days fly by. The ship has enough facilities to keep the fussiest of passengers occupied for the duration of the ocean cruise, with restaurants and bars offering a variety of food and drink in both formal and informal settings, a casino, swimming pools, spa services, a lido lounge and more.

The service on board harks back to the great British tradition of cruise ships, with a stylish interior, excellent customer service, and comfortable settings no matter what grade of cabin chosen. A tip for those on a budget: The cheapest times of year for travelling is May, but always make sure to book well ahead for the best price.

An ocean cruise like this is unique and unusual; definitely off the typical tourist radar and worth doing. The ship provides a safe and comfortable temporary home during travel, the Norwegian locals are friendly and helpful, and the sheer beauty of the scenery cannot be emphasised enough. Go on this

trip, and you'll have memories that will last you a lifetime.