

Touring holidays of Scandinavia

Expressions



Sognefjord fly-drive holiday



Sognefjord fly-drive holiday

7 NIGHTS/8 DAYS

Gol • Balestrand • Flaerland • Geilo



Balestrand

This luxury fly-drive holiday will introduce you to the longest and deepest of Norway's fjords: the Sognefjord. Start by flying into Oslo and driving to the town of Gol. The highlight of this area is undoubtedly its replica of the Gol Stave Church, which you can visit in the Gordarike Viking Park. The next morning depart your hotel after breakfast to travel the remaining way to Balestrand, crossing the Sognefjord multiple times en route. The scenery is the main attraction here, with the narrow fjord branches and incredible mountain landscape, and the best way to experience this is by boat. There are many options to take ferry tours to see the glaciers along the nearby Fjaerlandsfjord, or perhaps go kayaking on the calm waters. Fjaerland is also a popular hiking destination, offering the opportunity to trek across the glacier and witness incredible views of the fjord and surrounding mountains. You may like to spend one day embarking on the Flâm Railway, one of the world's most scenic railway journeys. Attractions in the town of Balestrand include the Norwegian Travel & Tourism Museum and the Sognefjord aquarium, entry to which includes the rental of a rowing boat or canoe. After 5 nights here exploring all that the Sognefjord has to offer you travel back to Oslo via Geilo, where you spend one night. This popular ski resort offers wonderful hiking options in its two nearby national parks, as well as rafting on the Numedalslagen River. The next day return to Oslo airport where you board your flight back to London.

Day one Arrive in Oslo and drive to Gol

Your holiday starts with a scheduled flight from London to Oslo. Collect your hire car from the airport and then embark on the 3-hour drive northwest towards Gol. Leaving Oslo, this will take you first through a heavily forested area before you pass several small towns, eventually skirting alongside the beautiful Lake Krøderen. Arrive at your hotel which is situated about 20 minutes' drive outside the town of Gol and check in for one night. You may wish to explore some of the nearby attractions including the Gol Stave Church, a copy of the original which was built in the 1200s. This beautiful church features detailed carvings and bright woodwork, making it a popular site for weddings. This area is also home to many excellent mountain trails, making it perfect for both hiking and mountain biking. Forested valleys combine with high mountains to give beautiful views of Jotunheimen, Hemsedal and Hallingskarvet. If you want to extend your stay here let us know and we can arrange it for you at the time of booking.

Day two Gol to Balestrand

Today you continue through the stunning Norwegian scenery to Balestrand. Your surroundings become more mountainous as you drive through the county of Vestland, and you will find yourself in mountain passes pressed in on all sides by majestic peaks. Cross the Sognefjord by car ferry and then by bridge before skirting along the edge, following the water as it widens out. One more car ferry ride will take you across to the opposite side of the Esefjord to your destination, and the final stretch of your journey consists of skirting this narrow inlet around its peak and into the small fjord-side town of Balestrand. Check in to your hotel for five nights.

Days three to six In Balestrand

Balestrand is situated on the northern shore of the majestic Sognefjord, the longest and deepest fjord in Norway, and is an excellent base from which to explore some of the best scenery and activities the country has to offer. The best way to experience the fjord is by boat, and there are regular services taking passengers up to Fjaerland along the Fjaerlandfjord branch, passing tiny picturesque villages, waterfalls and imposing mountains. One of the main attractions in Fjaerland is the Norwegian Glacier Museum. This fascinating exhibition gives an insight into the formation, research and future of the glaciers in the region, including a panoramic cinema showcasing the Jostedalbreen Glacier from every possible angle. For those seeking a more exhilarating glacial experience, it is also



Sognefjord

possible to walk on the glacier itself. Taking up almost half of the Jostedalbreen National Park, the Jostedalbreen glacier is the largest in mainland Europe. There are multiple options for hiking on the glacier, all of which are run by experienced guides, varying length and group size. You will be able to hear the ice melting as you cross it, and in April and May it is possible to cross the glacier on skis. For a slightly more relaxing trip, there are many other hiking routes in and around the national park, all of which are easily reached from Fjaerland's central town of Mundal. These routes will allow you to take in the beautiful scenery of the fjord, mountains and glacier. Closer to your hotel in Balestrand, hiking routes offer frequent viewpoints and picnic sites, allowing you to make a day of this enjoyable outing. For a panoramic view of Balestrand and the Sognefjord, the Orrabanken route climbs to 370 metres above sea level and is suitable for most fitness levels. The Fossetien walking route takes you past 7 mountain lakes and 14 waterfalls, including the incredible Likholefossen, where you will cross the churning waters as they plunge to the rocks below. Another popular activity here is kayaking on the calm waters, commonly up the short branch of the Esefjord on the north side of the Sognefjord. You may wish to spend one of your days here embarking on the Flam railway, Norway's most famous scenic railway journey. Start by taking the early express boat across to Flam, the starting point of the railway line. This incredible journey ascends 2,833 feet through mountainous terrain, passing towering cliffs, chasms and

cascades. The valley will start to narrow as you pass close by the Rjoandefossen waterfall before you cross the Hoga River. Arrive into Berekvam station at 1,129 ft above sea level shortly before passing through the longest tunnel on the line. Trains often stop after this at the station of Kjosfossen, allowing you to take in the 738-ft-high waterfall there. The final stretch sees you travelling alongside a mountain ledge hundreds of feet above the valley floor. Arriving into Myrdal, you will have enough time to stretch your legs before boarding the return service in time to catch the boat back to Balestrand. Other popular attractions in Balestrand itself include the Norwegian Travel and Tourism Museum, which follows the tracks of the first explorers and how their discoveries led to the development of the Norwegian tourism industry which we see today, and the Sognefjord aquarium, entry to which includes the rental of a rowing boat or canoe.

Day seven Balestrand to Geilo

Today you leave Balestrand and travel to Geilo en route back to Oslo. Start by retracing your tracks around the Esefjord and across the Sognefjord. You will then travel through a more mountainous region, passing close by Lake Vassbygdevatnet, before traversing the winding roads intersected by tunnels which take you up a narrow mountain pass, offering stunning views of the landscape each time you turn the corner. Continue through the mountain valleys, passing luscious green hillsides and multiple clear blue lakes, before



Gol stave church

arriving into Geilo, a sprawling town and your base for the next night. Geilo is mostly known for being an excellent skiing destination, but there are also numerous activities available during the warmer months. Its proximity to the two national parks of Hallingskarvet and Hardangervidda make it an easy base from which to go on multiple hiking routes, including the Prestholtseter trail which rises almost 500 metres to the top of the Hallingskarvet mountain range, giving you wonderful views of the Hardangervidda mountain plateau and the Hallingdalen valley. Other popular activities here include mountain biking and rafting on the Numedalslagen River, considered one of Europe's best rafting rivers.

Day eight Geilo to Oslo and fly to the UK

On your final day in Norway drive from Geilo to Gol and retrace your steps back to Oslo airport. Return your hire car and board your flight back to London.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This tailor-made touring holiday is one of several suggested touring holidays we can offer you exactly as it is but also with any alterations you might want including extra nights in one or more places or adding in extra places. All our tours can be extended so that you can include a longer stay in one mountain or lake resort too, perhaps at the end of the itinerary. Do call to discuss the options with our travel consultants.

PRICES

From £1,630 per person

Based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

Alternative hotel options can be offered in most locations as well as room upgrade supplements.

DATES

This holiday can be arranged throughout the year.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights with British Airways from London to Oslo
- Hire of a group B car for 8 days
- 1 night's bed and breakfast in a Standard double room at Storefjell Resort Hotel, Gol
- 5 nights' half board in a Historic room with fjord view at Kviknes Hotel, Balestrand
- 1 night's bed and breakfast in a Double room at Vestlia Resort, Geilo
- Concierge service and Expressions Holidays regional helpful hints

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Early check-in or late check-out at any hotels (although we can arrange this on request at additional cost)
- Any other services not mentioned above, such as transfers and meals except breakfast at hotels
- Personal holiday insurance. This is essential and cover should be in place from when you book the holiday.
- Possible local tourist tax, usually the equivalent of £1 to £3 per person per night, and payable locally to the hotel
- Transfers in any cities

TOUR CODES

SCFD01
EX338411

FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS

Our arrangements are very flexible in that you choose to travel on any day you want, subject to availability of your chosen transport and hotels. As mentioned above, additional nights can be added at any point.

OUR PRICES

The sample prices mentioned in this leaflet are generally a 'from' price based on the cheapest season of travel. However, fares and hotel rates can change (up and down depending on offers), so we give you an accurate price for your holiday when we provide you with a quotation. Our sample prices should be used as an indication of how much a particular combination will cost and to show the differences on average between the hotel categories on offer.

Expressions

BOOKING CONDITIONS

Our booking conditions apply to all holidays. A copy can be found on our website and a copy is also sent to you with a written quotation and when you make a booking.

FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Expressions Holidays offers full financial protection for all holidays you book with us. If your holiday includes a flight, the ATOL (3076) covers the costs of the holiday. If the holiday does not include a flight, it is the ABTOT bond that protects the cost of the holiday. We are also members of AITO (the Association of Independent Tour Operators) and ABTA.



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HOW TO BOOK

To make a booking, just phone us on

01392 441250

and we can take you through the details we need and start the booking process. A deposit is required to confirm the arrangements and this can be paid by debit or credit card over the phone. The level of the deposit will be confirmed at the point of booking.