

Sunday Mail

Sunday, March 22, 2026

ESCAPE

escape.com.au

SOUTH KOREA

An insiders' guide that goes beyond K-pop

10

WAYS TO
SEE NORWAY

DOC HOLIDAY

All your travel
questions answered

Beomeosa Temple,
Busan, South Korea



Lofoten

The village of Nusfjord in
Norway's Lofoten Islands.

A scenic view of a Norwegian fjord. In the foreground, a yellow fishing cabin with a white roof sits on a rocky shore. The water is a deep blue, and the mountains in the background are covered in snow and ice. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

10

COOL WAYS TO VAYCAY IN NORWAY

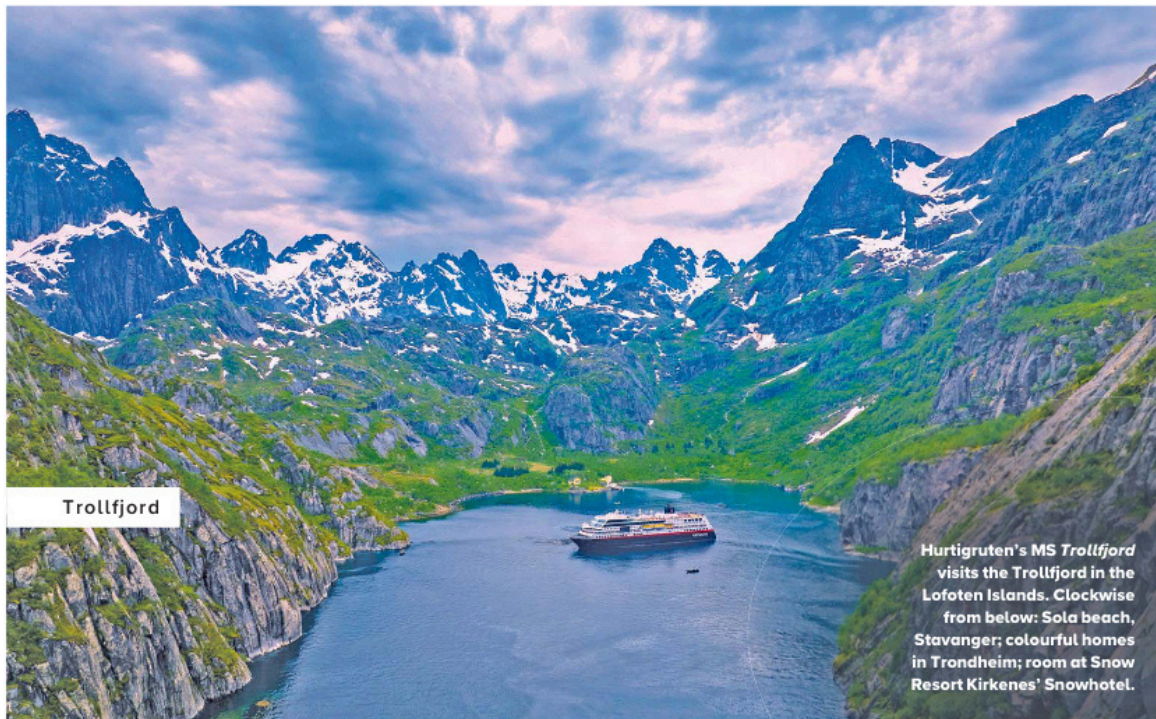
Monique Ceccato finds much more than snow and fjords in the Scandinavian nation

Snow, the Northern Lights, and quaint red fishing cabins teetering on the edge of the water are on most must-see lists for visitors to Norway, but go beyond the stereotypes, summer or winter, by car, ship or skis, and you'll discover just how diverse this nation is. Here are 10 incredible ways to see it.

1 Nature lovers Lofoten

There's not a single corner of Norway where nature doesn't star. Hiking and skiing are national sports, and at the slightest hint of sunshine Norwegians get outdoors. Some of the finest scenery is on the Lofoten Islands, where the ocean meets the mountains, and white-sand beaches rival those of Boracay. Book a few nights at Nusfjord, and your stay is just as much about what's outside the *koselig* (cosy) fishermen's cabins as what's in them, with snowshoeing, kayaking, SUPing, and even foraging hikes in the surrounding mountains all on offer. nusford.com

Continued next page



Trollfjord

Hurtigruten's MS *Trollfjord* visits the Trollfjord in the Lofoten Islands. Clockwise from below: Sola beach, Stavanger; colourful homes in Trondheim; room at Snow Resort Kirkenes' Snowhotel.

Book one of the more traditional-style cabins instead. For more entertainment, try the king crab safaris, real-life reindeer meet-and-greets, snowmobile rides, and husky sledding. snowresortkirkenes.com

8 Bucket-listers Northern lights

A trip above the Arctic Circle any time between mid-September and mid-April will, more than likely result in a bucket-list sighting of the aurora. If you're lucky, you'll see it from the comfort of your hotel room. If not, most larger towns and cities in the northern lights zone offer tours to areas with low light pollution. But, if you want to make it a tour to remember, charter *Stella Oceana* in Tromsø. Nothing quite compares to sitting in a steaming hot tub, on the deck of a slowly cruising yacht, while you wait for the show in the sky to appear. stellaoceana.com

2 Urban delights Oslo

Most visitors begin their trip in Oslo. Like all Scandinavian capitals, it's impossibly cool – you've just got to know where to go. The main street, Karl Johans Gate, and the area around the Munch Museum in Bjørvika, are obvious places for tourists to start, but the Grünerløkka neighbourhood flies a little more under the radar. Here, skateboards and strollers live in perfect harmony, and locals populate the cafés. Some of the city's coolest design stores are in this neighbourhood, and if you're interested in vintage shopping and flea markets, this is the place to be. visitoslo.com



3 Culture vultures Trondheim

Art, food, and history; Trondheim has it all, and the opening of PoMo – a museum of modern and contemporary art – in early 2025 only solidified the city's position as a leading Norwegian cultural destination. It's not the only gallery creating waves, with K. U. K (or Kjøpmannsgata Ung Kunst) and adjoining restaurant, Gubalari, pushing boundaries with their provocative art and installations. Amid all this modernity, history isn't forgotten, with places like the Britannia Hotel and Nidarosdomen (Nidaros Cathedral) preserving Norway's yesteryear. Guided English-language tours of the latter run daily during the high season. pomo.no

tucked into the dunes, and Solastranden could very well be mistaken for a beach in Australia's southwest. If you're not keen on the 14C water, book a session at the nearby Sola Strand Hotel's day spa for access to saunas and a heated pool. Pull on a dry suit, and the ocean temperature isn't so bad. Neither are the waves at Boretunet, where Boretunet run surf lessons year-round. solastrandhotel.no; boretunet.no

5 Adventurers Trøndelag

The 11-time Olympic gold medal-winning cross-country skier and superhuman Johannes Høsflot Klæbo calls the Trøndelag region home. Come winter, the towns closer to Trøndelag's Swedish border – the historic Roros, for example – are knee-deep in snow. The best way to explore them and their surrounds? Just like Klæbo, on skis. Join the guides at Fri Og Vill for an unforgettable overnighter in the snowy wilderness, with cross-country

skiing, tents, reindeer stew, and more. Extend the tour to five days and get a cosy Sámi experience, a stay on a reindeer farm, and a hotel stay (with a day spa), too. friogvill.no

6 Cruisers Fjords and coast

The Norwegian coastline – measuring over 100,000km – is synonymous with cruising. Seeing the country from the sea gives an entirely different perspective, and, depending on the cruise line, access to otherwise hard-to-get-to villages. To see more of the "real" Norway, and not just the major ports of Oslo, Bergen, and Tromsø, hop on one of the two local cruise lines, Havila or Hurtigruten. Their hybrid passenger ferry/cruise ships are compact, allowing them to cruise through fjords and dock in towns that larger ships can't. Just don't expect all the bells and whistles of some of the major cruise companies. havilavoyages.com; hurtigruten.com

9 Food fanatics Hardanger

This region is Norway's answer to the Murray-Darling Basin, with several hundred thousand apple and plum trees populating the sloping, fjord-side farms. Not only are the fjords ridiculously picturesque (especially in spring, when the apple and plum trees are in full bloom), but the microclimate here produces high-quality, high-acidity fruit, perfect for making the geographically protected Cider from Hardanger. Norway doesn't allow alcohol advertising, so it can be difficult to know where to go for tastings. The team at Up Norway has the lowdown and can tailor a food-and-drink-filled travel itinerary to suit your tastes. upnorway.com

4 Beach-goers Solastranden

With so many impressive fjords and dreamy winterscapes luring visitors to Norway, the beaches of the southwest don't get as much love as they should. Ignore the World War II bunkers



7 Family fun Kirkenes

Some childhood memories stick with you forever. Sleeping in -4C in a "hotel" made of ice would be one of them. The 13-suite Snowhotel is Snow Resort Kirkenes' biggest drawcard, standing year-round thanks to clever thermal blankets and featuring the ice-sculpting work of international artists – think *Frozen's* Olaf, giant reindeer, and an icy interpretation of Munch's *The Scream*. Don't worry, you'll be toasty warm with the Arctic-grade sleeping bags provided. Still worried about the cold?

10 Road-trippers Trollstigen

As far as mountain switchbacks go, Trollstigen is up there with the most dramatic. Its 11 hairpin turns wind their way down the side of a fjord in Rauma in western Norway, with impressive panoramas on your way down. It's one of the major drawcards along the Norwegian Scenic Route Geiranger-Trollstigen, one of 18 official scenic driving routes across the country. Some cross over thundering waterfalls, others over a series of island-connecting bridges; all of them are unspeakably beautiful. Hire an electric car – there are charging stations for them in even the most remote of towns – and hit the road for the road trip of a lifetime. nasjonaleturistveger.no



ESCAPE
HOT LISTS

SCAN HERE TO DISCOVER
THE ROOKIE MISTAKE YOU
SHOULD NEVER MAKE WHEN
VISITING NORWAY.