

Tourism in Norway

Norway, located in the far north of Europe, is mainly visited by foreigners because of its breathtaking nature and landscapes including its Fjord coastline, mountains and waterfalls. Additionally, one of Norway's main attractors are the Northern Lights. For this natural phenomenon around 200 000 visitors per year mainly search for places in the northern part of Norway such as Trømsø. Another tourist attraction that guides visitors to the parts of Norway that lay above the Arctic Circle is the midnight sun that can be seen for up to 76 days in the summer month.

Besides its nature, foreigners as well as natives are greatly attracted by outdoor activities. With over 44 national parks that cover around 7% of Norway's mainland, the country provides multiple opportunities for activities such as hiking or skiing. Moreover, the country in the north is rich on culture and offers numerous museum and historical sites which also contributes to the interest of foreigners in the country. To ensure the preservation of natural landscapes, Norway mainly emphasizes on sustainable tourism and eco-friendly travel opportunities. Another big tourism sector includes Norway's cruise tourism, with around 3 million passengers annually.

While Norway is not part of the TOP20 most visited European countries and also does not place first in the race of the most visited northern countries in Europe, tourism is still an important industry for the country itself.

Over the past years, the nation has seen a yearly increase in tourism. As of 2015, the TOP10 countries that visited Norway the most are all part of Europe (Germany, Sweden and Denmark placing at one, two and three) except for the United States of America and China that respectively place sixth and eighth.

In 2019, tourism alone generated around NOK127,4 billion (\approx 11,13 billion euro), accounting for 3,6% of Norway's whole GDP while 30% of this amount were contributed by international tourists. Moreover, the tourism industry employed in 2019 over 182 000 people full-time which is 7.4% of the total employment rate of the country. In the same year, Norway saw approximately 10 million international visitors. Nevertheless, international tourism is still being overshadowed by domestic tourism as 70% of all overnight stays in 2019 can be accounted to Norwegians. On average while visiting, about NOK 1 680 (\approx 146€) per day are being spent by international tourists and up to NOK 2 560 (\approx 223€) per day in the winter in the north. Annually, spendings by international tourists reach up to NOK 50 billion (\approx 4,368 billion euros). Norwegian households spend around 7.2% of their expenditures on domestic travel.

Likewise globally, Norway's tourism sector was greatly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. While international overnight stays fell by around 76.4% in 2020 and international tourism expenditure dropped from NOK23.9 billion (\approx 2,088 billion euro) in 2020 to NOK18.2 billion (\approx 1,590 billion euro), the share of domestic tourism increased in the same year to 86%. Nevertheless, international tourism could recover in 2022 with over 10.5 million international arrivals with the top sources of visitors being Swedish and Danish, the Swedish spending approximately 996 000 nights in Norway and the Danish visitors around 830 000.

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