

## THE LOFOTEN & VESTERÅLEN ISLANDS

6 Nights / 7 Days

Self - Drive



The charming small communities in the archipelagos make up the Lofoten and Vesterålen islands. The island culture is based on friendliness and you will meet the locals in traditional fishing villages and trading centers. In the past years employment has changed from fishing and farming to trade and services like many other Norwegian towns. These magical islands of beautiful nature and friendly culture invite you to explore the area of traditions, food, activities, changing weather and northern splendor. Experience the islands from toe to top and enjoy a memorable whale safari, a definite highlight!

### **Day 01: Arrival in Bodø**

Arrival in Bodø according to your own itinerary \* We recommend Bodø to be your pick up point for the car rental. The second largest city in Northern Norway is a modern town that is very important to Norway's aviation history. A visit to the National Norwegian Aviation Museum is highly recommended. The town is surrounded by beautiful nature, including the Børvasstindene mountains to the south, and Landegode Island and the Lofoten Islands to the north. The city's open backdrop of distant rugged peaks and vast skies makes it one of Norway's most interestingly-positioned towns and the seas to the north feature a number of dramatic islands which support the world's densest concentration of sea eagles.

Accommodation in Thon Hotel Nordlys

### **Day 02: Bodø – Moskenes (Ferry) Moskenes – Reine**

Breakfast at the hotel. Morning at leisure before departure by ferry from Bodø to Moskenes. The over three hour long ferry will bring you across the Vestfjorden to the Lofoten Islands, which stretch like a wall of mountains from the southwest in the sea. For centuries, catching cod and drying them has been a way of life and Lofoten's largest industry. Two of the most recognisable sights are the fishermen's shacks (rorbu) and the Stockfish (cod) that has been hung to dry on a wooden frame. The Lofoten means mountain peaks, open sea and protected bays. Thanks to the Golf Stream the climate here is milder than in other parts of the world at the same latitude.. From Moskenes you drive to Reine, your base for exploring the Lofoten islands.

Accommodation in Reine Rorbuer

**Day 03- 04: Reine and the Lofoten Islands**

Breakfast at the hotel and your two days can be enjoyed at leisure as you explore the Lofoten islands. We recommend, a visit to Stamsund – to explore and enjoy this delightful region. The most important trading goods are the stockfish which still is produced here and exported to southern Europe, South America and Africa. Stamsund is still a vibrant fishing port in Lofoten, but is also a culturally interesting town with several local artists, theater groups and an art gallery. We also suggest some time to visit the Lofotr Viking Museum, a historical museum based on a reconstruction and archaeological excavation of a Viking chieftain's village in Borg. North of Leknes. The museum includes a full reconstruction of an 83-meter long chieftain's house (the largest ever found in Norway), a blacksmiths forge, two ships and their boathouses, and various re-enactments intended to immerse the visitor in life at the time of the Vikings.

Accommodation in Reine Rorbuer

**Day 05: Reine – Andenes (202 km –including ferry)**

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive through the islands and a suggested stop in Svolvær- the “capital” of the Lofoten islands is well worth the effort. Svolvær offers the atmosphere of a harbour, a small town and art centre simultaneously. This is a bustling trading and communications centre. The town has many art galleries to visit, and we recommend the Northern Norways Art Centre, Gallery Dagfinn Bakke and Magic Ice which displays ice sculptures. (gallery exhibitions subject to change). Continue to Vesterålen using the ferry crossing from Fiskebøl to Melbu. Passing through small towns, make a stop in the old trading centre Stokmarknes to visit the museum of the famous coastal express Hurtigruten. The need for transportation of fish, post and goods from Stokmarknes started the route along the coast and the traditional Hurtigruten was created. This route is now called one of the world's most beautiful sea voyages. Continue through Andøya and to the village of Andenes - your base for exploring the Vesterålen Islands.

Accommodation in Lankanholmen Sea Cabin.

**Day 06: Andenes, whale watching**

Breakfast at the hotel, and the time has come to enjoy, in our opinion one of the highlights of the tour. Meet up with the rest of the group at Whale museum in Andenes. After a guided visit, departure by boat from the fishing village for a full day out seas. This is a whole day at sea (7-8 hours) and offers you a grand opportunity to see several species of whale and exotic sea birds. After a successful day at sea, return to the hotel.

Accommodation in Lankanholmen Sea Cabin.

**Day 7: Andenes – Harstad (118 km – including ferry)**

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive from Andenes towards Sortland leaving the green Vesterålen islands. On your way to Harstad you will drive through valleys and beautiful villages located on the shores of the fjords, and we recommend selecting the route through Kvæfjord, which naturally includes the short ferry-crossing between Flesnes and Refsnes. Departure from Harstad or Evenes (Harstad/Narvik) according to your own itinerary.

**Services:**

- 6 nights hotel or rorbu accommodation in shared double with shower/WC
- 6 Scandinavian breakfast buffet
- Domestic ferry crossings (car included):
- Bodø – Moskenes / Fiskebøl-Melbu / Flesnes – Refsnes
- Full day at sea, as specified in day 6, including coffee/tea and a light meal

\*\*Please note the car rental price is not included, however we do have car rental rates and will be happy to provide this to you on request\*

\*\*Should you require a pre or post night due to flight times - please do not hesitate to contact us.

The price is valid from the 25.05 – 15.09. 2012