Northbound *Travel*

Independent advice for the far north



THE FREE GUIDE · OPENING PAGE · BERGEN TO KIRKENES · HURTIGRUTEN AND HAVILA

Ferry or Cruise?
What the Norwegian Coastal Route is really like

The route from Bergen to Kirkenes is a working coastal service, not a cruise itinerary. That one fact changes almost every decision you are about to make.

What is a working ferry doing on a bucket list?

Hurtigruten and Havila run the route as a real coastal service. The ships carry cargo and local passengers, and over the years they have evolved to carry holidaymakers too. You travel on a ship with a job to do. That is the appeal, and it is also why it does not feel like a cruise.



THE LOFOTEN ISLANDS, ON THE ARCTIC STRETCH

So is it a cruise or not? The honest answer

Both descriptions are partly true, which is why the research gets confusing. You get a cabin, your meals and a coastline most cruise ships never reach. You do not get a casino, a theatre or a formal night. Once you know which of those you actually wanted, the choice becomes simple.

Why read a guide before you book?

The route has more choices than it first appears: which stretch, which season and which ship. Most people find the answers spread across a dozen websites. This guide puts them in one place you can read in a sitting.

THE REST OF THE GUIDE COVERS

1. What the Norwegian Coastal Route is, and who runs it
2. How a working coastal service differs from a cruise ship
3. A day on board, from the first port call to the last
4. The questions first time travellers ask us most
5. How to work out which stretch of the route suits you
6. What the Arctic section is really like, and how to prepare

Then call us and tell us what you are still unsure about

Tell us what you want from the trip and we will tell you honestly whether this route fits. If it does not, we will say so and suggest what will. That conversation costs nothing.

Northbound Travel. Independent travel advice.

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