

EUROPE-NORWAY

# Lofoten Islands Kayak Exploration

Arctic Kayaking Adventure

8 day trip itinerary



# Norway: Lofoten Islands Kayak Exploration



## 8 day trip-7 days kayaking

Situated approximately 150-200 kilometres above the Arctic Circle, the Lofoten Island archipelago is renowned for its stunning scenery and a rich culture steeped in history. Sea kayaking through the Lofoten fjords is an incredible experience; the Lofoten Wall, a dramatic collection of mountain peaks, surge straight out of the ocean providing spectacular paddling. On shore, there will be many opportunities for short walks into the hills, discovering Viking history, sampling the local delicacies and experiencing the sights and sounds of each village. Being above the Arctic Circle means nearly 24 hours of daylight with sunsets that last for hours, a fitting end to each superb paddling day. Accommodation each night is in cozy and comfortable fisherman's cottages, called Rorbuer. Join us on a very special trip that combines a perfect balance of outdoor adventure and cultural exploration!

## A Quick Itinerary

B = Breakfast • L = Lunch • D = Dinner

**Day 1:** Meet in Kabelvag, 5.5 kilometres south of Svolvær. Trip briefing. Overnight in Kabelvag.

**Day 2:** First day of kayaking. Overnight in Henningsvåg. B • L • D

**Days 3-7:** Paddle the Lofotens. Overnight in Rorbuer. B • L • D

**Day 8:** Exploring Reine and surrounds.

Trip concludes with a transfer to Kabelvag and Svolvær. B • L

## Meeting Place

We meet at our cabin accommodation in Kabelvag on Day 1. Check in time is from 3pm. Accommodation is based on twin share rooms but single rooms are available for an additional charge. Any luggage not required while kayaking can be left in storage in Kabelvag and picked up at the end of the trip.

## How to Get There

Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) and Wideroe Airlines operate daily flights from Oslo to Svolveer and v.v., sometimes via Bodo or other regional towns. Flights can be booked online or through your travel agent.

<https://www.flysas.com/en/>

<https://www.wideroe.no/en>

A taxi from Svolveer airport to Kabelvag costs around 50 Euros and takes about 15 minutes. You can phone for a taxi on arrival into Svolveer airport or use the electronic kiosk outside the main airport doors (on the left wall). The electronic kiosk will quote a price and arrival time of the taxi. The name and contact phone number for the taxi service is Svolveer & Kabelvåg Maxi taxi DA phone: +47 07550. <http://www.lofotentaxi.no>

Currently, there are no airport bus connections.

## Paddling Experience

Kayakers should be of an intermediate standard and have paddled before on outings of up to 20km in length. You should be comfortable paddling in 15 knot winds with a metre (three feet) swell and wind chop. The sea conditions may sometimes be very confused along cliff faces and around headlands, where the sea state is often more intense. You do not have to be an expert or know how to roll but should have an adventurous spirit and recognise that the weather will greatly influence what we can and can't do. For additional experience, rent a kayak before leaving home and seek out a local operator for some paddling tuition. We'd be happy to talk to you about your level of experience and may be able to advise how to obtain the necessary skills before your trip.

DO practice paddling in a variety of conditions prior to the trip. Generally, the water surface ranges from calm to a one metre (three foot) swell.

In general, the fitter you are, the more you will enjoy the paddling. It's a good idea to begin some regular exercise like walking, jogging, cycling, aerobics or swimming well before the trip.

**Please Note: Along with your booking form we require all participants to complete our "Sea Kayak Experience Form" and return it to us immediately to secure your spot.**

## Proposed Itinerary

**The following itinerary should be seen as an approximate guide only. Please note that weather and sea conditions can cause alterations and delays to our itinerary. Accommodation noted is subject to availability. Paddling distances are approximate.**

**Day 1:** Make your way to the group cabin accommodation in the picturesque village of Kabelvag. Check in is available from 3pm. Your guide will be shopping for the trip during the day and will leave instructions at the cabin if they are not there when you arrive. The trip briefing with your guide will be held this evening. If you have some time, Kabelvag is a perfect town to explore. Historically, it was the most important village in the Lofotens during the Viking era. King Oystein founded the village and ruled until 1123. Kabelvag has something for everyone, from a fishing museum to a gallery dedicated to Norwegian artists and an aquarium. Dinner is not included tonight and we recommend you grab something to eat in Svolvær on arrival or while exploring Kabelvag, Excess luggage not needed while kayaking can be stored at the accommodation and picked up at the end of the trip.

**NO MEALS INCLUDED/CABIN (ROBUER) ACCOMMODATION**

**Day 2:** After breakfast, we head to the waterfront to start the paddling adventure. After customising the kayaks and a safety briefing, we paddle south along the sheer granite walls of Austvågøya Island's shores. Lunch is enjoyed on a secluded beach with towering cliff walls in the distance. Then it's back into the kayaks for the short paddle to Henningsvåg. With the afternoon free, this picturesque fishing village is a lovely place for a stroll. A visit to the Lofotens Hus, the area's best known art gallery showcasing more than 100 works by Norwegian artists is recommended. Enjoy local delicacies, art and crafts and settle into the rhythm of the Lofotens. Paddling distance approximately 10kms.

**B • L • D / ROBUER ACCOMMODATION**

**Day 3:** Launching our kayaks this morning, we head across the Gimsoystraumen Fjord to Vestvågøy Island. Today's paddle includes white sand beaches, hundreds of small islands, thousands of schools of fish and incredible granite cliffs. Today is our biggest paddling day but we'll still take time to enjoy all the sights and sounds of our surroundings. The village of Stamsund is our destination and accommodation is in a Rorbuer right on the water's edge. Paddling distance around 25kms.

**B • L • D / ROBUER ACCOMMODATION**

**Day 4:** Today's route is along massive granite walls that rise straight out of the ocean and make for some interesting and fun paddling. In the afternoon, we'll pull into the village of Ballstad, our overnight stop. Paddling distance 16 kms.

**B • L • D / ROBUER ACCOMMODATION**

**Day 5:** This morning we make our way to the Lofotr Viking Museum. This exhibit is housed within a reconstructed 83 metre Viking House and contains fantastic displays of artifacts, with the atmosphere of an old Viking home. We will return to Ballstad for lunch and continue our paddle south to Flakstadøya Island and the

picturesque village of Nusfjord. This village is located in a tight cove surrounded by towering peaks. The buildings here were constructed in the 19th century and have been attractively restored, capturing the character and culture of the Lofotens. Paddling 12kms.

**B • L • D / RORBUER ACCOMMODATION**

**Day 6:** On today's paddle we'll explore Skjellfjorden Fjord, stopping in the town of Sund. We can visit the Sund fishing museum for an insight into the fishing history of the area. Our next stop is the lovely town of Hamnoy, our base for two nights. The views from Hamnoy are stunning, as three smaller fjords join at the town, with towering granite mountains surrounding each fjord. After pulling our kayaks ashore we'll check into our Rorbuer. Paddling distance 16 kms.

**B • L • D / RORBUER ACCOMMODATION**

**Day 7:** On today's outing we paddle up the spectacular Reinefjord and into the Bunesfjord. After pulling our kayaks ashore we'll go for a short hike over to Bunes beach which is on the north shore of the Lofotens. This beach is one of the most spectacular in the Lofoten group, with golden sands flanked by huge granite walls. For those with a strong constitution, the beach provides the perfect place for an Arctic dip! Hopefully we will spot a rare sea eagle and watch the antics of puffins. We will return to Hamnoy in the afternoon and enjoy supper at the Rorbuer Restaurant as our last evening meal together. Paddling 13 kms and a 2.5 km hike.

**B • L • D / RORBUER ACCOMMODATION**

**Day 8:** This morning we'll have the opportunity for a paddle or a stroll through nearby Reine and surrounds before transferring back to Kabelvag and Svolvaer. End of trip arrangements.

**B • L / ACCOMMODATION NOT INCLUDED**

## End of Trip

We finish the trip with a transfer to Kabelvag and Svolvaer. If you wish to fly out from Svolvaer on Day 8, we suggest booking a flight with a departure time after 7pm. If you're concerned about missing a connection, we recommend you stay in Kabelvag or Svolvaer overnight. Accommodation and dinner on Day 8 is not included in the trip cost.

## Climate

The warm marine currents of the Gulf Stream ensures the climate in the Lofotens is considerably milder than in other parts of the world at the same latitude. However, summers are still relatively cool with July and August average day temperatures ranging between 10 and 18 degrees celsius. The weather can be highly variable, warmer days with higher temperatures are not uncommon as are cooler, rainy days. The water temperature is an average of 13 degrees celsius. Winds are generally light, but occasional weather disturbances can bring windier conditions.



## Accommodation

We spend seven nights in Rorbuers (traditional fisherman's huts). The Rorbuers date back to the twelfth century when King Oystein ordered the first of them to be built around the Lofoten coast to provide shelter to fisherman. These charming and attractive sea side cottages provide guests with authentic Norwegian accommodation. The group will generally share one cottage with twin share bedrooms. Single rooms may be available for an additional cost.

## Meals

The guide will prepare all meals during the trip starting on Day 2 of the itinerary. We are happy to cater for vegetarians and other special dietary requirements. Please let us know your dietary requirements at the time of booking and note it on your medical form. It's a good idea to bring along some of your own dietary substitutes if you have a specialist diet, for example, gluten-free cereal.

## The Country and its People

Norway is a stunningly beautiful country, known for its fjords, glaciers, high mountains and superb coastal paddling. The country spreads 2000 kilometres from south to north, with nearly a third of the country lying north of the Arctic Circle. Norway shares its borders with Sweden, Finland and Russia. Norway was first settled more than 10,000 years ago with the end of the Ice Age. Perhaps the most well-known period of Norway's history was the Viking Age, when Nordic pirates plundered northern Europe and modern day UK. Today's population of around five million is mostly of Nordic, Alpine and Baltic heritage, although immigration is increasing. There are about 30,000 Lapps (Sami) in Norway, many who still live a traditional nomadic life herding reindeer in the far north. The majority of Norwegians are fluent in English.

## Communication

There are two mobile phone/cell providers, Norway Telenor and Netcom. Both have good coverage throughout the country. SIM cards can be purchased from a Teleshop, 1GB data packs cost about 100NOK (about US\$12.00).

## Travel Arrangements

Should you voluntarily decide to alter your travel arrangements after commencement of your trip, Southern Sea Ventures and operational partner Expedition Engineering, are not responsible for any additional charges involved. Our staff will assist you if possible but you are responsible for organising these arrangements yourself. Delays may occur due to weather or transport difficulties and while we do our best to keep to schedule, it is not always possible. We're sure you will appreciate this and accept it as part of the whole travel experience.

## Travel Insurance

It is necessary to take out a personal insurance policy to cover yourself against sickness, accident, loss of baggage, trip cancellation due to weather or other reasons and in the unlikely event that you need emergency evacuation by plane or helicopter due to illness or accident. Ensure you have read the policy thoroughly and are familiar with the claim process. We will require proof of your insurance prior to departure.

## Conservation

It has always been our motto that “we take only photographs and leave only footprints”. We are keenly aware of the ecology of the areas we visit and try to limit our impact on them. We ask that each person takes out everything they bring in including sweet wrappers, batteries, etc.

## Photography

We are paddling in a salt-water environment and the delicate electronics in digital or film cameras can be damaged. You might consider a waterproof camera or a small plastic waterproof case or dry-bag with a supply of silicon packs. Ensure you have sufficient memory storage and batteries for a digital camera. If you are using a film camera it is wise to keep lenses to a minimum. One variable lens will reduce your load and the amount of your equipment that can be damaged. If you are buying a new camera, consider a waterproof one and get it well before departure so you can practice, as it is inconvenient to find fault with the camera during a trip.

## Money Matters

### **Your tour cost includes:**

- Seven nights twin share accommodation.
- All meals from breakfast on Day 2 to lunch on Day 8.
- Expedition kayaks, paddles, life jackets and safety equipment.
- Guided walks and land excursions.
- Watertight bags for your personal gear.
- Dedicated kayak guide.
- Transport and entrance fee to Viking Museum.
- Group first aid kit

### **Your tour cost *does not* include:**

- Any flights.
- Accommodation and dinner for the night of Day 8.
- Airport transfers.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Travel insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as wifi charges and laundry.



## Currency

The unit of currency is the Norwegian Kroner. The exchange rate is approximately AU\$1.00 = 6NOK and US\$1.00 = 9NOK.

There are automatic teller machines in many of the towns we visit, but we recommend bringing the equivalent of US\$300 worth of Krone in cash on the trip.

## Security

Before leaving home, photocopy your passport, airline voucher and make a note of your credit card and ATM card numbers in case you lose or misplace them.

## Passport

Make sure that you have a current passport and that its validity will extend to six months after the date of your return. You should have two blank pages in your passport for the Norwegian entry/exit stamps.

## Visas

Citizens from most western countries are not required to obtain a visa to enter Norway for stays up to 90 days. However, it's always best to check the latest requirements with your local Norwegian consulate.

## Medical Matters

All participants are required to provide us with a medical questionnaire filled out completely and accurately.

Please check with your doctor or medical centre whether you require any vaccinations or boosters.

We strongly recommend that you bring any required medicines and a small first aid kit for your own personal use.

Please advise us of any side effects of any medication you take and of any dietary requirements related to the medication. Be sure to let your guide know of any drugs to which you are allergic as well as noting this on your medical form.

### Medical Supplies

On our sea kayak trips we carry a comprehensive medical kit. However, it is your responsibility to bring sufficient quantities of any specific medications you require. In addition we suggest that each passenger bring:

- Sun screen (water resistant variety at least SP30).
- Lip protectant.
- Band-aid strips.
- Insect repellent.
- A mild anti-nausea drug if you are concerned about sea sickness.
- A mild antiseptic soap/liquid handwash.

### Equipment & Clothing

It's important to keep personal gear to a minimum as your clothes and personal items are packed into the kayaks in the provided dry bags. We recommend you bring your own small 5–10 litre dry bag for items you may need during the day while kayaking. Excess luggage can be stored in Kabelvag while we are on the trip.

We have found that drysuits are too warm but if you particularly feel the cold we may be able to supply. As per below, a high quality dry top is essential.

The list below should be used as a guide when packing. Contact us if you have any questions.

### Gear List

#### Essential Items:

- One set of thermal underwear.
- One wool or fleece thermal mid layer.
- High quality paddling jacket that is windproof & water resistant.
- Rain gear (top and pants) for paddling/hiking/walking.
- Thermal jacket (down or synthetic), optional.
- Wool/fleece hat.
- Two pairs of thick wool/synthetic socks and one pair of thinner socks.
- Casual clothes for non kayaking (a pair of jeans/casual trousers, one nice shirt).
- One pair of shorts (the weather could be warm).
- Paddle booties.
- Hiking boots/cross trainers.
- Dark sunglasses with a cord to prevent losing them in the water.
- Sunscreen and sun hat.
- Medical kit to include personal medications, bandaids, throat lozenges, lip salves and sea sickness tablets. Don't forget your

regular medication, for example, asthma inhalers (even if you only occasionally use one).

- Paddling gloves to prevent blisters.
- Headlamp.
- One litre water bottle and/or thermos.

**Recommended:**

- Camera.
- Insect net for face protection.

## Delays or Problems

In case of last minute delays or problems, contact Southern Sea Ventures in Australia on +61 2 8901 3287. Your guide's contact number will be advised closer to the trip.

### **SOUTHERN SEA VENTURES**

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