

# 7 Good Reasons to Trade Sunny Beaches for Norway This Winter

When temperatures drop drastically and the holiday season approaches, most people's instincts are to either stay where they are, cozy up to the fireplace and their loved ones, or to go on a tropical vacation, where the weather is sure to be much more appealing. Very few of these people would trade their comfort for a trip up north into chilly Norway, but there are a few good reasons why they should.



The Northern Lights, for instance, are one of nature's most spectacular displays, and one each traveler should have on their 'to see' list. It is true that you can catch the show from less chilly places, but some of the best views of the lava lamp-like, horizon to horizon display are to be found in Norway. A good, fun way to tick this item off your bucket list of sorts is to take a winter cruise up north into the Arctic Circle, where the lights are frequently clearly visible.

Speaking of nature, you'll be surprised to hear that Norway is actually not nearly as cold as it's made out to be. In fact, the weather in Oslo is quite similar to that of the US's northeast. It may not be an improvement, per se, but it's bearable enough that no one won't likely catch frostbite from going there in the winter, unlike some of its neighboring countries.

Another great advantage of visiting Norway in the winter is the lowered prices on flights and accommodation. This is particularly important because northern European countries are notoriously expensive, which means travelers should take every promotion they can catch – especially those from Norwegian airlines.

We've already discussed the weather, but failed to mention that the country is pretty much covered in snow at this time of the year. That is why Norway is one of the leading countries in Nordic skiing. Resorts specialized in this sport abound in the country, as do more traditional downhill ones, making it a great alternative for those who want to go on a ski vacation but avoid busier locations like the Alps.



Still in subject of entertainment, Norway also offers great opportunities for those who love dark and heavy music such as black and death metal. Oslo is a hub for the sub-culture, with several hotspots holding concerts of famous as well as up and coming bands, but Trondheim is also a great place for fans of the genre to go. Music fans should also take the chance to visit the Museum of Black Metal Music and Culture as well as Trondheim's own Rockheim museum, which features an appropriately atmospheric death metal garage exhibition.

Black and death metal aren't Norway's only important cultural contributions, though. The country's also originated some of the most popular crime novelists of our time. Jo Nesbo's Harry Hole novels, for instance, are worldwide best-sellers, and while they're fictional, for the most part, there is a dark side to the country which you can appreciate every Tuesday if you take one of Oslo's Harry Hole tours. You don't need to take them during winter, of course, but the dark clouds and snow-covered sights offer the proper atmospheric enhancement to such endeavors.



Last but not least, there is one more thing that you can only see and truly appreciate in Norway during the winter months: sleigh dogs and reindeer. This is a magical experience for adults as well as children, which is best enjoyed in the Kvaløya Island. There, you can sit in a traditional tent and drink some hot chocolate while sitting on a reindeer blanket. Then you can see the friendly sleigh dogs, which are usually nice and eager to interact with people, and go on a sleigh ride like no other you'd be able to experience anywhere else in the world. Playing with these furry puppies is not only allowed, but encouraged, so it is worth every single second you spend far north for that alone. If you'd rather try for Santa's own ride though, reindeer abound as well, and reindeer sleigh rides can also be arranged in the area.

So there you have it: Northern Lights, sleigh rides, Nordic skiing adventures, music museums and crime novel tours are just some of the unique activities that one can only take advantage in Norway during the winter. It may not be Hawaii, but you'd have to agree it has its own brand of charm.

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