

01  
Hardangerfjord  
near Odda, Norway

# N O R





SPOT ON  
&  
AWAY

WORDS MIRIAM CAIN

The fjords of southwest Norway are what draw most charterers to explore these majestic cruising grounds. The narrow inlets of sea, bounded by craggy walls of rock are nature at its best. Springtime sees the snow retreat to the mountaintops, leaving a landscape scattered with waterfalls and streams that flow to reach the magnificent fjords. It may not be the place to head to spend your days sunbathing on deck, but really the only place to be is on deck as nothing can prepare you for the beauty of the passing scenery. The scale and the glittering fjords, with their subtle shifts in rock color, and the staggering white distances of mountain heights will make you and your guests stand on impulse as though giving an involuntary ovation.

From the Lofoten Islands in the north to the southern fjords, the land of the midnight sun makes for a dramatic and awe-inspiring backdrop for any yacht charter. The most popular itinerary for any cruise in Norway begins in Bergen. Spend a day ashore exploring the city before a cruise around the fjords, including the famed Hardangerfjord and Sognefjord. From the fjords, cruise south to Stavanger, or north to the Lofoten Islands. Part of the Arctic Circle, the approach to the islands offers views over the towering peaks of the Lofoten Wall – a 200-mile range of mountains.

## STAVANGER

A former European capital of culture, Norway's oil capital Stavanger is at its best in the summer when the near continuous daylight illuminates the stunning twin-harbor city. Colorful wooden buildings cradle the hills and line the quaysides amid modern interpretations of a seafaring past. Stavanger is the perfect place to spend a day exploring ashore before you begin or end a charter along the southwest coastline of Norway.

### Culture @

Serious about its heritage, Stavanger has several museums. A visit to the Norwegian Petroleum Museum may not sound exciting, but almost half a century ago Norway's first oil field opened and subsequently the nation has become one of the richest in Europe. Walk around the magnificent Vagan Harbor (to the west of the city) and discover bronze sculptures by Antony Gormley. Norway's oldest church, Stavanger Cathedral dominates the city center with its pair of grand towers. Following a tour of the cathedral (don't miss the baroque pulpit), take a hike around the lake to Gamle Stavanger (Old Stavanger). The quaint cobblestone streets of the old town are lined with more than 170 white clapboard houses from the late 18th century. Built in 1850 as a watchtower to guard against fires in the city and aboard the ships in the harbor, the historical Valberg tower provides panoramic views over the city and waterfront. For those with a penchant for music, Stavanger Concert Hall is a modern venue where highly celebrated classical concerts are performed throughout the year in a stunning setting by the waters' edge.

### Explore @ Lysefjord

From Stavanger head to Lysefjord, passing beneath one of the spectacular bridges created as a result of oil wealth. Cruise alongside Pulpit Rock, a wedge of rock nearly 2,000 feet above the water. A climb to the top rewards with the most breathtaking viewing platform in the world.

### Shop @ Øvre Holmegate

The winding streets beneath Valberg tower have a concentration of national and international boutiques, especially along Øvre Holmegate. Locally made arts and crafts can be found throughout the cobblestone streets of Old Stavanger.

### Dine @

With the freshest fish on offer, sushi is a must. Omakase is billed as one of the finest sushi restaurants in Norway and serves traditionally prepared Japanese dishes. Timbaktu Sushi, by the waterside at Nedre Strandgate, offers sharing menus of butterfish, halibut and, for the meat eaters, duck and sirloin. For a special occasion, Re-naa was awarded a Michelin Star in 2016, (reputedly Norway's first outside the capital). Chef Sven Erik Renaa creates dishes using the best of the region's produce in one fixed-price menu.

### Drink @

For a relatively small city, Stavanger punches above its weight with a wide range of bars and a vibrant nightlife. For an encyclopedic menu of beers, head to Cardinal in the old town; whisky lovers will find a varied menu at the Holmen Bar in the Victoria Hotel.

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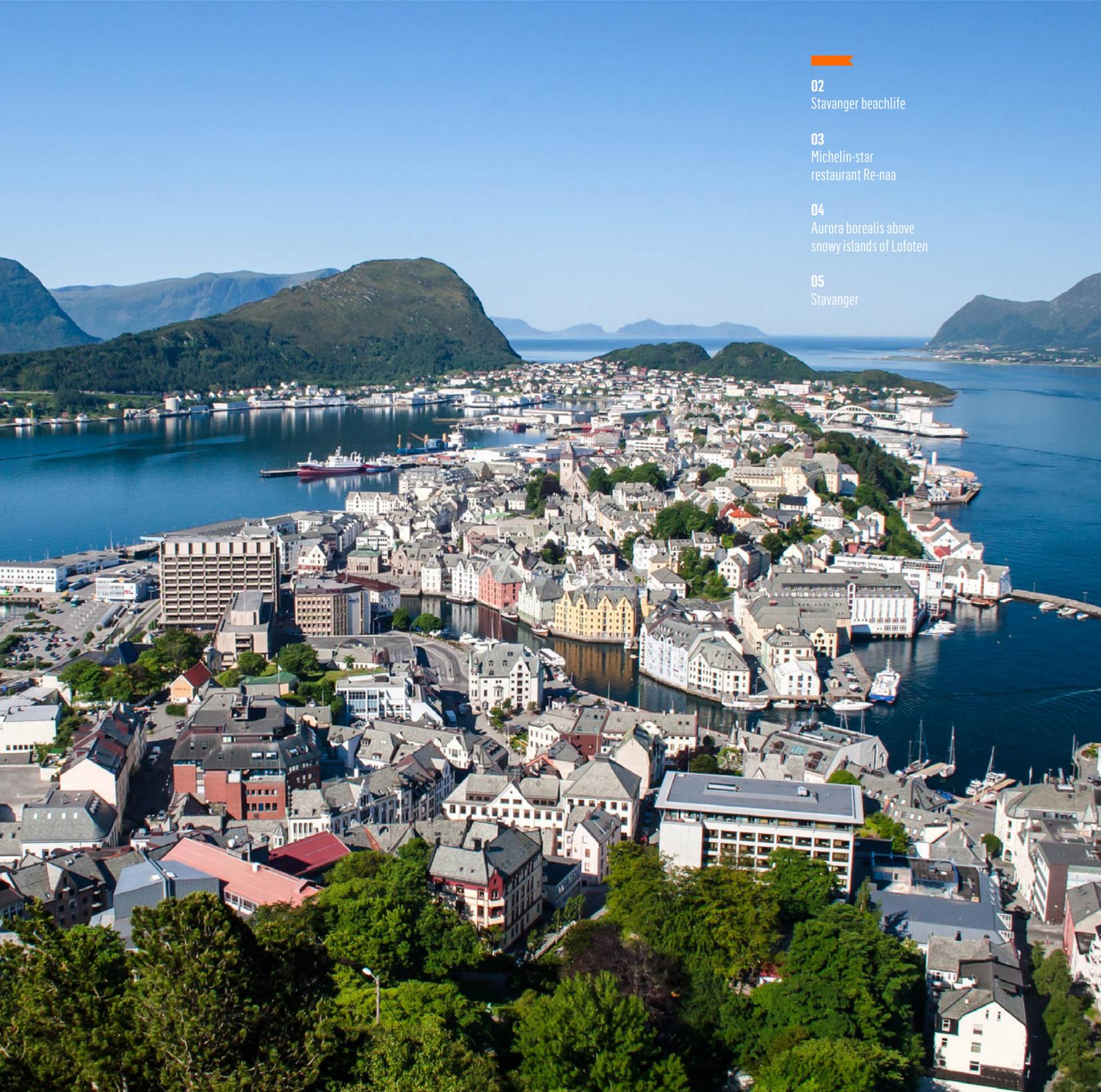


**02**  
Stavanger beachlife

**03**  
Michelin-star  
restaurant Re-naa

**04**  
Aurora borealis above  
snowy islands of Lofoten

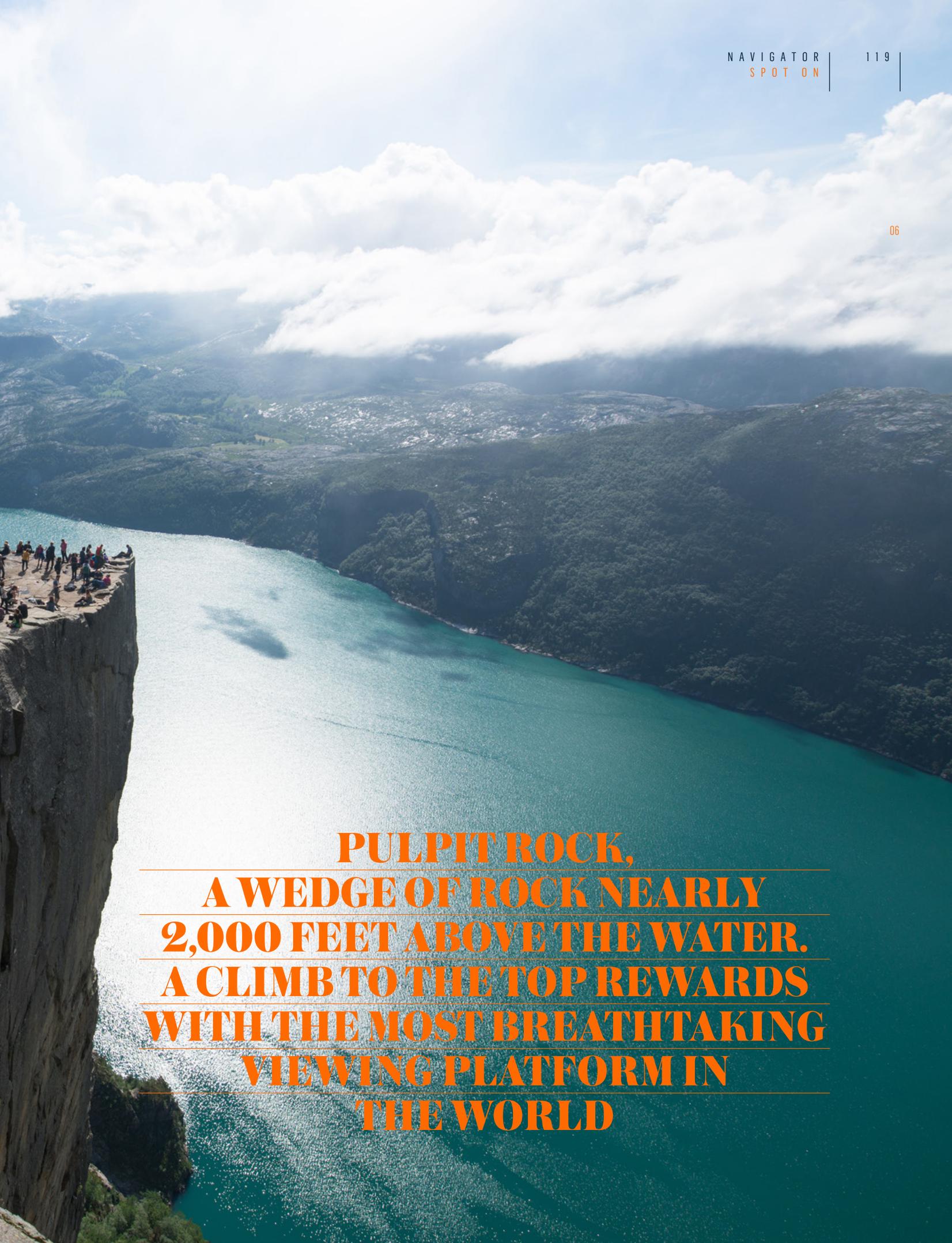
**05**  
Stavanger



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Cliff Preikestolen,  
also known as Pulpit Rock  
over fjord Lysefjord





**PULPIT ROCK,  
A WEDGE OF ROCK NEARLY  
2,000 FEET ABOVE THE WATER.  
A CLIMB TO THE TOP REWARDS  
WITH THE MOST BREATHTAKING  
VIEWING PLATFORM IN  
THE WORLD**

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## BERGEN

Lush mountains flank the small seaside city of Bergen, which woos superyachts with its natural beauty, history, culture and Scandi gastronomic scene. Best known as the gateway to the fjords, Bergen remains under the radar of the tourist trail and has the atmosphere and charm of a small town. It is best to avoid July when the cruise ships pass through; August and September are the ideal months to step ashore. Sunny for about 20 hours a day throughout the summer, there is plenty to keep you occupied and most attractions are walking distance from the famously colorful port.

### Culture @ Bryggen

Early evening, when the cruise ships have departed, take a wander through the medieval district of Bryggen, lined with boho clapboard houses, down to the cafés beside the famous fish market. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the colorful buildings and narrow alleyways date back to the 14th century—also known as Norway's Golden Age when merchants from all over the world traded in the port. Most of the buildings were destroyed and rebuilt after a fire in the early 18th century, but 62 survived and original preserved interiors can be seen at the Hanseatic Museum.

### Explore @ Mount Fløyen

For panoramic views over Bergen and the surrounding fjords, take the Fløibanen funicular to the top of Mount Fløyen, 1,050 feet above sea level. The more adventurous in the party can hike to the top or mountain bike along the trekking trails.

### Shop @ Fish market

Head to Bergen's fish market, Fisketorget, with your chef and sample fresh whale, herring, salmon, caviar, mackerel – choose your favorite and your chef can create delicious seafood delicacies back on board. Scandinavians live and breathe stylish, functional design and many designers look to the region for all things furniture, décor and interiors. For the latest Nordic interior trends shop at design boutique Norden og Verden. For clothing boutiques, Torgallmenningen is Bergen's main shopping street. For vintage try Secondlove, and Fresh Pepper for Scandi brands such as Acne. For traditional items, including jewelry, art and folkloric carving, the alleyways of Bryggen are brimming with shops. Try Juhls Kautokeino for Norwegian jewelry designs, and Gunvor for quirky art.

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The iconic clapboard architecture of Bergen

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**Dine @**

Bare Vestland is great for fresh takes on traditional dishes, and Lysverket is inventive and cool with things like oyster emulsion and sorrel sorbet on the menu. For extensive seafood dishes, Boha uses locally caught produce served with Mediterranean influences. Alternatively, prize-winning chef Hanne På Høyden's menu includes cured reindeer, amongst other locally sourced ingredients, all served in an elegantly rustic room at the restaurant of the same name.

**Drink @**

Lysverket is the place to head for cocktails with a Norwegian twist, while Henrik Øl & Vinstove serves more than 50 different types of Scandinavian beers on tap. The Whisky Bar at the Hotel Terminus is where you will find the well-heeled Bergen locals, while the younger crowd hang out at Muskedunder. Go dancing at Landmark, which also has art shows, or Apollon's, where local bands play.

**Spa @ Solstrand Hotel**

Even the most seasoned explorers appreciate a little pampering; Scandinavia is, after all, home to the ubiquitous sauna. Just south of Bergen lies the Solstrand Hotel, right in the heart of Norway's fjords. Be sure to relax in the Jacuzzi and take in the views of the fjord before experiencing a Swedish massage, body wrap, steam bath or traditional sauna.



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**08**  
Floyibanen  
funicular

**09**  
Fisketorget  
fish market

**10**  
Lysverket

**11**  
Solstrand Hotel

**12**  
Bare Vestland

## LOFOTEN ISLANDS

Lying 120 miles north of the Arctic Circle, Norway's Lofoten archipelago is made up of six principal islands that are populated, and hundreds of smaller islands, most of which are uninhabited. This is an enchanting area of picturesque villages, majestic mountains, deep fjords and a diverse landscape that offers hiking, skiing, fishing, ocean rafting, surfing, or scuba diving. The untrammled landscape forms a dramatic backdrop to an adventurous charter through the summer months.

Lying between 67° and 68° North latitude, the Lofoten archipelago is an ideal place from which to see the Northern Lights, which are best viewed from anything in between 65° and 75° North latitude. However, displays of the Aurora Borealis tend to intensify around the equinox months of September and March, and can be viewed from September through to mid-April. While the Northern Lights are always happening, the Arctic Circle's midnight sun makes it impossible to see them during the 24-hour summer light but, due to the warm Gulf Stream, the Lofoten Islands have a much milder climate than other parts of the world on the same latitude and are a stunning alternative cruising ground. ●

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Reine Village,  
Lofoten Islands,  
Norway



**THIS IS AN ENCHANTING AREA OF  
PICTURESQUE VILLAGES, MAJESTIC  
MOUNTAINS, DEEP FJORDS &  
A DIVERSE LANDSCAPE**

