

NORWAY –THE LOFOTEN ISLANDS

8-days / 7-nights centre-based guided walking in a spectacular location



The dramatic scenery and intense light of the **Lofoten Islands** give them a reputation as one of the most beautiful island archipelagos in the world, and this one-week guided walking holiday in the far north of Norway must be one of our most spectacular. The islands are truly a photographer's delight, bathed as they are in the transcendent light of the 'midnight sun'. The mountains are not high but they plunge sharply and steeply to the sea. Although the Lofoten archipelago is some 200 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle, the Gulf Stream current in the Atlantic Ocean causes a relatively mild climate.

During the week we visit beautiful lakes nestling amidst the mountains, walk along the coast and try to spot sea eagles and whales, ascend a few of the smaller mountains and passes, visit charming fishing villages with their traditional *rorbu* (fishermen's cabins), and take the ferry to the neighbouring islands of Hadseloya, the home of Hurtigruten, and Skrova, with its sandy beaches and panoramic views over the 'Lofoten Wall'.

Our one-hotel guided walking holidays offer a choice of two guided walks each day, an easier walk or a more challenging option, and there is a free day mid-week to explore the local area or to relax. There is plenty to do on your free day – take a cruise on the narrow Trollfjord, only 100 metres wide at its mouth, an unforgettable experience; or visit Henningsvaer, a quaint town with colourful traditional houses. The gentle waters around Henningsvaer make it an ideal location for diving and snorkelling – a truly once-in-a-lifetime experience swimming amongst the rich aquatic life of the Arctic Circle. Svolvær is home to the Lofoten War Memorial Museum, with its collection of WW2 uniforms and artefacts and its display on the Allied commando raid 'Operation Claymore' in 1941, an attempt by the Allies to capture the Enigma machine.

Cost from: \$3335 per person (twin share) Single room supplement from \$1145

Departs: 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th August; 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th September

Starts and Ends: Svolvær

Includes: 7 nights in comfortable hotel room with ensuite bathrooms, 7 breakfasts, 7 evening meals, local transport to/from the walks, experienced walks leaders offering choice of two levels of guided walks on 5 days.

Not Included: Meals and drinks not mentioned, personal expenses, transport and/or excursions on your free day. Airport transfers from Harstad/Narvik Evenes Airport (about 2½ hours' drive from Svolvær) can be pre-booked at extra cost – we recommend you take these, please ask for details.

Accommodation: The elegant waterfront 3-star Hotel Scandic Svolvær stands on an island, Lamholmen, in the heart of Svolvær surrounded by pristine waters and soaring mountain peaks. An eye-catching, boat-shaped building houses a restaurant and bar with panoramic views across the harbour and you can watch the Hurtigruten ships dock each day. The hotel has 146 en-suite bedrooms, all decorated in simple Scandinavian style. Holidays in Svolvær are Half Board with a buffet breakfast and dinner. Free Wi-Fi is available.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Footpath and walking information:



Easier walks: 7 to 11km with up to 350m of ascent in a day, on mostly good paths with some rough and rocky sections.



Harder Walks: 10 to 16km with up to 810m of ascent, mostly on good paths with some steeper and rougher terrain, some pathless terrain and rough, rocky paths.

Suggested itinerary: Our experienced leaders offer the choice of two different grades of walk each day. Choose the option which best suits your interests and fitness

Day 1: Arrival day – plan to arrive at the hotel mid-afternoon in time for dinner. For those requiring a transfer we can arrange these at a set departure time from the airport (at extra cost) - ask for details

Day 2: Svolvaer and Kabelvåg A walk today through Svolvaer with its colourful houses and traditional red and yellow fishermen's cabins called *rorbu*. We then pass by two major lakes through a landscape shaped by glaciers, beneath or to the top of Svolvaer's local mountain, Tjeldbergtinden, and continue under the shadow of the mountain of Kongstinden surrounded by glacier scraped rock stripped of all vegetation which is so typical of the arctic. We end our walk in the historic town of Kabelvåg, the oldest town in the north of Norway. We have time for a beer or coffee overlooking the harbour, before catching the bus back to Svolvaer.

Day 3: Hills and beaches A morning coach transfer to the Haukland and Utkaleiv areas of the island of Vesvågøy, known for their white sand beaches and turquoise seas against a backdrop of towering mountains. We begin our walk ascending the round, but surprisingly steep hill of Holandsmelen, descending to the farm of Kjellbogen and then following a grassy track and unsealed road to Haukland. Continue along the old road to Utkaleiv and follow the good track round the headland with its coastal views.

Day 4: Free day Take the opportunity to cruise down to Trollfjord, a spectacularly steep and narrow fjord or visit the *Venice of Lofoten*, the little fishing town of Henningsvaer, perched on the end of a thin promontory.

Day 5: Exploring Apnesefjellet or Justadtinden We travel south-west today to Stamsund, one of Lofoten's traditional fishing ports. The area provides a relatively accessible way for all walkers to reach some stunning viewpoints. The easier walk explores the Apnesfjellet ridge, where, weather permitting, there are views of indescribable beauty, especially east, out to sea, and down to a network of islands. Alternatively we ascend gradually to the col below the mighty summit of Justadtinden and continue round the ridge to the summit of Steindalstinden, walking through a wild upland area studded with lakes and wetland with exhilarating views if the weather permits. Both walks finish at the pub/café in the lovely village of Stamsund

Day 6: Hadseloya Return by coach to the island of Hadseloya, which forms part of the archipelago of Vesterålen. Following a track up the Annstad valley, we come across a series of beautiful secluded lakes. We then ascend on paths to the small hill, Barheia, from where – weather permitting – we are rewarded with superb views of the west coast of the Lofoten islands, the island of Hinnoya, and the mainland mountains. We follow a path down to the small village of Melbu, where we await the ferry and bus ride back to Svolvaer.

Day 7: The Island of Skrova Both groups take the ferry to Skrova today, with its sandy beaches and the best view back to the Lofoten wall (as the islands are commonly called). Skrova has been a centre for fisheries and whaling for decades and is a fascinating island to explore. Both groups circumnavigate the island; the easier route passes beneath the mighty bulks of Hogskrova and Stappen over to Merrvika Bay, while the harder walk ascends the rocky path to the top of Hogskrova, the highest point on Skrova, before descending to Merrvika Bay. Although the mountain rises only 282 metres it is a very steep path aided by handrails. Continuing around the island back to the village where there are art galleries and cafes, before returning by the ferry to the hotel.

Day 8: Departure day Tour departs after breakfast – transfers to Harstad/Narvik Evenes airport are available at set departure times at extra cost; please ask for details.

Outdoor Travel offers similar guided or self-guided walks in regions of **France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Switzerland and Austria** as well as the UK where we offer the popular and challenging **Coast to Coast** trail, walks in the **Cotswolds** and the **Lake District** or the **West Highland Way** in Scotland. **Outdoor Travel** also offers great pilgrimage walks such as the **Camino de Santiago** or the **Via Francigena**, the pilgrims 'Road to Rome' - ask for details or see our website.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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