

# Iceland/Norway; Viking History and National Day Celebration Trip May 2018

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## **Day 1, Thursday May 10th: Depart for overnight flight to Reykjavik, Iceland**

Evening departure for an overnight flight to Reykjavik, Iceland.

## **Day 2, Friday May 11th: Reykjavik**



From the airport, we go straight to the famous Blue Lagoon, one of Iceland's most popular attractions. A natural geothermal pool in the middle of a large and dramatic lava field and an oasis that owes its existence to a nearby geothermal power plant, looming large over the aqua tinted waters. We stop for 1 ½ hour for a refreshing bath or a swim in the inviting, rejuvenating and pleasantly warm mineral-rich water (36°C-38°C/100-110°F), reputed for its healing properties. An indoor pool

and geothermal sauna are also on the site. Bathing in this surreal environment is a unique experience no one should miss. The Blue Lagoon's warm water and natural active ingredients like mineral salts, silica and blue green algae help you relax and escape the stress and strain of daily life.

We will also do a little city sightseeing in Reykjavik today and learn its history and landmarks.

**Overnight at Thingholt Hotel (or similar) - Reykjavik**

## **Day 3, Saturday May 12th: Reykjavik**

Today, we have planned for a trip to Þingvellir National Park and Gullfoss Waterfalls. Our tour guide will pick you up at your hotel. Þingvellir is a place highly interesting from both geological and historical points of view. Here you can see the effects of the tectonic plate movements which have opened various cracks and fissures in the earth crust, and it was also here that the Icelandic Parliament was founded in the 10th century. Also see the spectacular waterfalls with big drops and wonderful views walking a short hike along the waterways.



**Overnight at Thingholt Hotel (or similar) - Reykjavik.**

## **Day 4, Sunday May 13th: Reykjavik and Transfer to Bergen**

Today it is time to say farewell to Iceland and take an 8 am flight to Bergen, Norway. We will arrive at 12:15 pm and be met by a local guide and coach for sightseeing tour of Bergen.

Following check in at the hotel you are free to enjoy the town with Fløibanen, Haakonsvern Castle to find the best cafe's and shops for a wonderful time. Rest of the day is all yours!



**Overnight at First Hotel Marin – Bergen.**

## **Day 5, Monday May 14th: Bergen**

A UNESCO World Heritage city, ancient Bergen looms large in Viking sagas. Until the 14th century, it was the seat of the medieval kingdom of Norway. In 1360, the German Hanseatic League set up one of its import and export offices at Bryggen, dominating trade for almost 400 years. This history comes alive as we join our English-speaking guide for a walk along the historic Bryggen wharf and visit the **Hanseatic Museum**, in an old merchant house.

Seafaring Bergen has given the world two cultural icons – playwright Henrik Ibsen and composer Edvard Grieg. Late morning, drive to **Troldhaugen**, the home of Edvard Grieg and his wife. This typical 19th century residence with a panoramic tower and large veranda overlooks Nordas Lake. Visit the house where Grieg spent his last 22 years, the museum, graveyard, and hut where he composed music. After a light lunch (on own) at the Troldhaugen Café, enjoy a **concert** of Grieg's music in a special concert hall. Tour ends at the hotel and the remainder of the day is at your leisure.

**Overnight at First Hotel Marin – Bergen.**

## **Day 6, Tuesday May 15th: Bergen and Transfer to Flaam/Gudvangen**

After a nice morning in Bergen we leave for Flaam/Gudvangen. Gudvangen – or Gudvangr means:



The field of the gods by the water. It is situated in the inner Nærøyfjord, which has been included on UNESCO's World Heritage List since 2005. The National Geographic magazine rated the Nærøy valley a total of 87 points and as the world's No. 1 natural heritage site, along aside with the Geirangerfjord.

We will visit Viking Valley or Njardarheimr, a living recreated historic town, a society of Viking reenactment and a place of Viking age experience, entertainment and education. Enjoy!

Enjoy the views, scenery and Viking activities in this magnificent place!

**Overnight at Gudvangen “Viking” Hotel / Gudvangen Fjordhotell in Gudvangen.**

### **Day 7, Wednesday May 16th: Flaam/Gudvangen – Transfer to Oslo**

After a nice breakfast, we spend the morning in Gudvangen with its spectacular nature. At mid-day we gather and go on an early afternoon cruise from Gudvangen to Flaam. This beautiful boat ride is one of the gems in Norway. We arrive in Flaam and get set to board the train to Oslo. This train ride is famous for its spectacular views.



We arrive in Oslo late, about 10:30 pm. Check in at hotel.

**Overnight at Thon Hotel Bristol - Oslo.**

### **Day 8, Thursday May 17th: Oslo – Constitution Day**

We enjoy a hearty breakfast at the hotel and join the crowds in the streets for the biggest party (by far) in Norway. Parades go through the main street of Karl Johans Gate and up to the Royal Castle where the Royal Family greets them. This one you should not miss at all!



There are activities all over the city and people everywhere today! Enjoy the day with all of them!

**Overnight at Thon Hotel Bristol - Oslo.**

### **Day 9, Friday May 18th: Oslo/Tonsberg**

Today we'll get on the bus and go to Tonsberg, the oldest continuously inhabited city in Scandinavia with roots back to the early 800s AD for a spectacular trip on the water in a replica of the famed Oseberg Viking Ship. We'll have a look at the city but will focus on learning how to move and navigate a true Viking Ship while learning about local, regional and national Viking history. Bring practical clothes fit for a trip on the water!



In the afternoon we return to Oslo where the rest of the afternoon and evening is free time to spend as you wish.

**Overnight at Thon Hotel Bristol - Oslo.**

### **Day 10, Saturday May 19th: Oslo**

We will also visit Vigeland Sculpture Park where impressive bronze sculptures can be viewed and if time and the crowds allow for it, the Viking Ship Museum. At the **Viking Ship Museum**, we see a

wonderful collection of 1000-year-old ships and ornate sledges and carriages that makes history come alive. We will also visit Norsk Folkemuseum, an open-air museum displaying the history, traditions, culture and lives of people in Norway from about year 1500 to today. It is a wonderful place to visit!



Gol Stave Church at Norsk Folkemuseum.

This evening we gather for a Farewell Dinner.

**Overnight at Thon Hotel Bristol - Oslo.**

### **Day 11, Sunday May 20th: Oslo and Return Home**

After breakfast, you can enjoy the last day before our transfer to the airport for our afternoon flight back to Tampa. We will arrive in Tampa at 9 pm.

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