

## Norway

**When** you think of Norway you probably think of majestic fjords and dramatic scenery and a trip there will not leave you disappointed. Cruising through the fjords you see them in all their majesty, sometimes glinting in the sunlight with waterfalls running down the steep mountains on either side. At other times the mist descends and creates an atmosphere of mystery as mountains appear and disappear.

So we have the wonderful fjords and the rugged scenery but there are also places to see.



Old Town Stavanger

Stavanger is the fourth largest city in Norway and dates back to 1125. It is often referred to as the oil capital of Norway. My favourite part of Stavanger is Old Town which comprises 173 wooden buildings dating back to the turn of the 18th century. They were going to be pulled down but now they are a major tourist attraction. They are all now privately owned and are very expensive to buy. All are painted white with red roofs and are very picturesque.

Bergen is the second largest city after the capital Oslo and is surrounded by mountains and fjords. The waterfront area known as Bryggen is particularly attractive and popular with tourists. The colourful wooden houses (now shops) on the old wharf were once a centre of the Hanseatic League's trading empire. Bryggen is now a world heritage site.



Bryggen (Bergen)



Floyer Mountain Viewpoint

A good way of seeing over Bergen is to take the Floybannen Funicular up to the viewpoint on Floyer Mountain. Be warned though, low cloud and mist can very often shroud the view as the picture shows!



Hardangerfjord Bridge

Nigardsbreen Glacier gives an idea of just how huge glaciers are. You may not be able to see on the photo in the size we can print, but there are people standing at the bottom of the glacier and they look minute. It is interesting how the colours change with the conditions. In bright sunlight glaciers appear white but when cloudy they appear more blue.



Gerainger (at the end of Gerainger fjord) makes a picture postcard when viewed from above as you can see from the photo. The dock there is interesting as it is a floating dock that is powered by motors and is driven out to cruise ships to enable passengers to land rather than having to transfer onto small boats. Very clever.

Briksdell Glacier is reached after a bit of a hike. As you walk upwards you go across a bridge over a very powerful waterfall, which can be a wet experience!



You then walk upwards alongside the waterfall to arrive at a lake and at the end of the lake you see the Briksdell Glacier. It is interesting that, in 2009, it was possible to almost touch the glacier from the end of the lake. As you can see from the photo it has receded a long way. Climate change is real.



I will write more about Norway going further north another time. I hope to give a talk on Norway at the Welton Library and Community Hub when we can once again get out and about and sit near each other.

**Jim Blainey**