

WINTER IN NORWAY



Packing

- I went over Thanksgiving, so the winter season had just begun and it was obviously cold. Tromsø tourism rocks and they are totally prepared for those of us coming from warmer climates, so any tour you go on will most likely provide some kind of thermal outerwear for you, but I still recommend packing warm. Thermal bottom layers, very decent coat, gloves, hat, ears, etc. You know your cold-weather capacity more than I do, so just pack smart.
- Some people recommend traveling with a crossbody, but it never fits enough of my things and I personally don't find it useful. #toeachhisown. I used to have a cloth one I traveled with, because the cloth allowed it to expand. (I could fit a bottle of wine in it... which was a dream come true). I also loved my over the shoulder purse that was a comfortable size, but now I have a leather backpack I bring with me that I love dearly.
- If you're going in winter, it's worth investing in a good, warm pair of snow shoes. You want warm + comfortable. I have a pair of warm snow Uggs I love and a pair of sturdy boots from REI that I also love. Do your research, find what best suits you, but be prepared! Blisters on vacation ARE THE WORST!

Misc.

- Get a GOOD converter. I've bought cheap ones that were garbage and won't stay plugged in, so I'd suggest spending \$10-20 on a good one. Amazon has tons, read the reviews. [Here's](#) the tricked out one that I have and it's amazing. PS don't bring your blow dryer, it will fry and most hotels (and Airbnbs) provide them. I also suggest investing in one of those power bars for recharging when you're out and about. You can buy them anywhere here and they come in SUPER HANDY since your phone seems to drain extra quickly while abroad.
- \$\$\$: I take cash out of the ATM once I get there. The ATM fee is so low compared to the conversion rate (which usually sucks), so you won't even notice. I usually take out a large amount (make sure to do it during the day and stuff it low in your purse). Most shops and eating places take credit/debit cards, but I recommend having both because #youneverknow. Make sure your CC company doesn't charge an exorbitant foreign fee and that they know you are going abroad. Euros have tons of coins with some being \$1 and \$2 coins, so make sure you have a coin purse thing on your wallet to keep up with them.
- Be aware that since Norway is so far north, their seasons are extreme. During the winter, the sun rises late and sets early. Daylight is anywhere from 10am to 4pm. Summertime is the opposite with the Midnight Sun. Just be prepared!

Food

- Norway is overall on the more expensive side, so expect to pay \$20-30 for a normal entrée. And they aren't known for having exceptionally elegant cuisine, so you probably won't be blown away by anything you have. Also, I would characterize most of the cuisine as being more meat-heavy. Just know that going in and have the right attitude so you aren't salty every time you go to pay your tab.
- I was directed by a local to a SOUP BUFFET at Skarven, one of the local pubs. Sounds kind of dinky, but unlimited hot soups on a cold day = perfection. And it was only \$9 and is in the cutest lodge-type setting in the middle of town. Then pop over to the local bar next door and make some new friends!
- Almost everyone speaks English there, so that's a huge plus. At restaurants, I like to ask what the most popular things are or what the waiter's favorites are – forces them to explain at least a few dishes in English and I can usually pick something yummy from those.

Transportation

- I only ever took a cab from the airport into town, so I don't have much advice. In Tromsø, the town is super small and walkable so there aren't an abundance of taxis or buses and as far as I know, they don't have Uber.
- I did take the public train from the airport into Oslo to walk around for an afternoon during my layover and I didn't have any issues.

Favorites

- **FJORDS!** Um, what's a fjord (pronounced fee-yord)? It's a deep, narrow sea or lakedrain with steep land on three sides. Basically they are gorgeous landscapes and each fjord is different. They're all over Norway and super beautiful. Lots of tour companies will take you all over to the best ones and depending on the time of year, you can see different wildlife too! I went with [Wandering Owl](#) and loved them.
- **WHALES!** There is some prime whale watching to be done in Norway. Humpbacks, killer whales, porpoises, sperm whales, minke whales, blue whales and more. It's even more majestic seeing them in their natural habitat, and all the tour companies take great care of you with warm outer layers and awesome amenities on the boats. Use [TripAdvisor](#) to research which one is best for you. I had a super great experience with [Arctic Explorers Norway](#) – lots of tour options and they discount if you bundle.
- **NORTHERN LIGHTS!** I can't adequately describe the feeling of watching the Northern Lights dance before your eyes, I can only tell you to go experience it! I saw them walking home one clear night and the next we drove almost to the Finland border to see them since it was cloudy in Norway. I loved my trip with [Arctic Explorers Norway](#) – they built us a fire, fed us a filling and delicious dinner, and taught us as much as you want to learn about the Northern Lights. I very much appreciated their dedication to making our experience a special one.
- **MY AIRBNB!** It was charming, warm, conveniently located and so special! Jorgen, the host, is a pro and was so helpful. I hope all of my Airbnbs live up to how amazing this one was > [see it here](#).



**ACTUAL
PHOTO
FROM MY
WHALE
WATCHING
TOUR**

