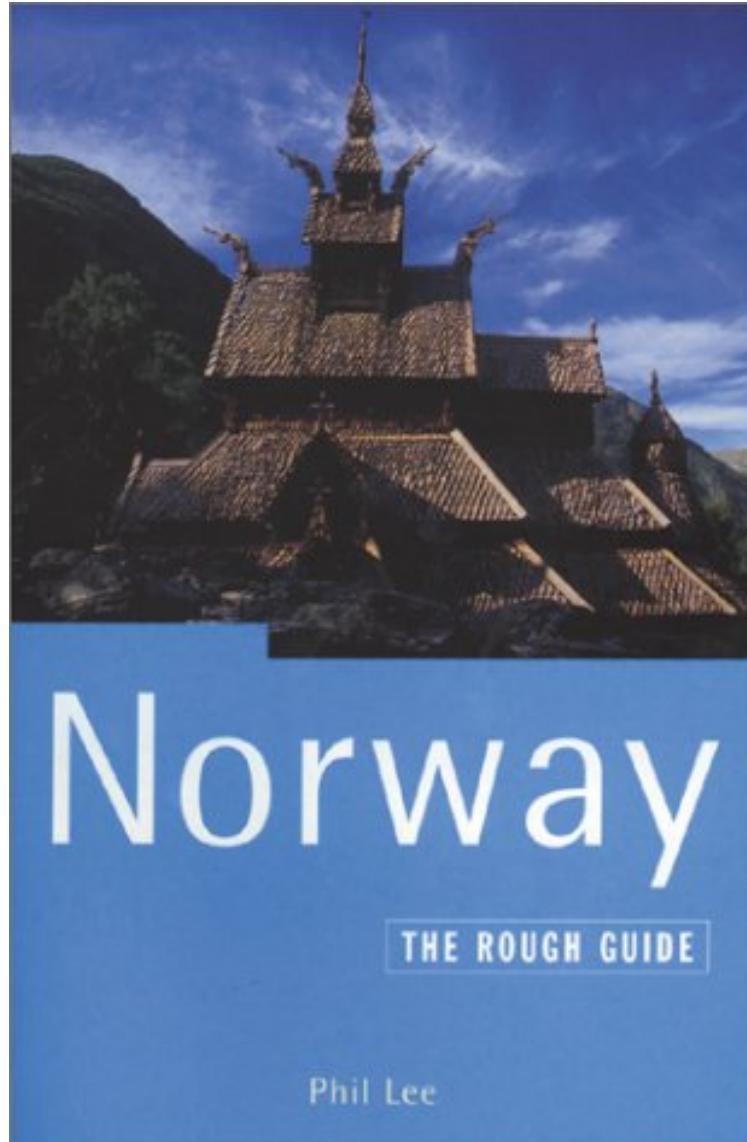


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## The Rough Guide to Norway, 2nd Edition

*Phil Lee*

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**Phil Lee : The Rough Guide to Norway, 2nd Edition** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rough Guide to Norway, 2nd Edition:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Solid, Relyable Guide... One of the Best Out on Norway. By fdoamerica Is this the best guide for Norway? Almost (see my Lonely Planet: Norway review). The information that Lee gives you regarding the "Basics" (flights, travel companies, visas, etc.) is the best out in a guide. The maps (a critical element in any guide) are adequate, but not great. Also, the maps only show the locations of the noted hotels,

but omit locating restaurants. Go figure. An ongoing peeve that I have about Rough Guides is their use of a number system to quote the price range of a hotel, ie. a Hotel costs a '2', then you have to flip back to the numeric legion to find out that 2 = 500-700kr, which you then divide by the current rate of exchange. As other guides demonstrate, there are better ways to help your reader gage approximate cost. I am disappointed that the 'boxed' vignettes that usually embellish other Rough Guides are few and far between in this guide. Finally, this guide omits an accommodations or a restaurants index. Thus, if you have a recommended restaurant you want to look up you have to go through all the restaurant pages 'til you stumble across the name you seek or miss seeing it completely. The profile of Oslo is the best out, and if you are only going to Oslo, then "Norway: The Rough Guide" is the preferable guide. Phil Lee has included an excellent section on recommended books to read and a good piece on Norwegian Literature. Though not complete there is a scattering of website and email addresses for travel companies and some hotels, Although all hotels have their phone and fax numbers listed, nothing beats email. If you are going to explore this wonderful country then "Norway: The Rough Guide" will be a welcome companion. Recommended 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. I had the previous edition, but it was OK... (3.5 points) By Anthony The previous edition of the Rough Guide-Norway was the first guide book I ever got. I was planning a trip to Norway then, but, I found out that there weren't enough information in it. Then, I got the Lonely Planet version, and I fulfilled a lot more than the Rough Guide's. First of all, the information about Svalbard was quite outdated. Longyearbyen has quite a bit more than what I have read there. Also, throughout the book, it never gave much information on anywhere. In the Lonely Planet one, you could find A LOT more descriptions of different towns and places, while, the Rough Guide would almost only MENTION THE NAMES of the towns without saying anything more about them (where to stay, etc). Sure, they MAY NOT be as interesting to a lot of people, but a guide book's job is to provide as much information as possible, because there ARE travellers with different interests. The Rough Guide also lacks a lot of useful information such as accomodations and eateries. The Lonely Planet seemed like they weren't as lazy into researching on that part. I also have to thank the Lonely Planet for advertising my friend's restaurant in Troms for free basically, without him even acknowledging it until I told him!! I didn't know him until I decided to go to his restaurant for the first time. Without the Lonely Planet book, I wouldnt have met such a great friend. Anyway, overall, the Rough Guide was OK...but I will definately prefer buying the Lonely Planet books. The Rough Guide seems to NOT give enough information. If some info is outdated, it is understandable (things change all the time), but Lonely Planet definately did put more effort into it. Both the Rough Guide edition of mine and the Lonely Planet were the '97 series. I suggest you to do a comparison of the 2 books at a bookstore or something first, if possible. Hopefully the newest edition of the Rough Guide-Norway is a lot better than the previous one. Good luck.

A travel handbook featuring coverage of hiking routes, the national parks, and descriptions of Norway's fjords and tundra. The book offers reviews of the best places to eat, drink and sleep, whether in Oslo or in the villages, and has accounts of museums, galleries and ancient sites.

**A SUPERB SERIES THAT NEVER MISSES A BEAT** New York Newsday Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Where to go With a population of just over four million, Norway is one of the most sparsely inhabited countries in Europe, and its people live mostly in small towns and villages. Almost inevitably, the country's five largest cities are the obvious initial targets for a visit. Urbane, vivacious Oslo, one of the world's most prettily sited capitals, has a flourishing caf scene and a clutch of outstanding museums. Beyond Oslo, in roughly descending order of interest, are Trondheim, with its superb cathedral and charming, antique centre; the beguiling port of Bergen, gateway to the western fjords; gritty, bustling Stavanger in the southwest; and northern Troms. All are likeable, walkable cities worthy of your time in themselves, as well as being within comfortable reach of some startlingly handsome scenery. Indeed, each can serve as either a base or a starting point for further explorations: the trains, buses and ferries of Norway's finely tuned public transport system will take you almost anywhere you want to go, although services are curtailed in winter. Outside of the cities, the perennial draw remains the western fjords - a must, and every bit as scenically stunning as their publicity suggests. Dip into the region from Bergen, ndalsnes or even Stavanger, all accessible direct by train from Oslo, or take more time to appreciate the subtle charms of the tiny, fjordside villages, among which Balestrand and Fjrland are especially appealing. This is great hiking country too, with a network of cairned trails and lodges (maintained by the nationwide hiking association DNT) threading along the valleys and over the hills. However, many of the country's finest hikes are to be had further inland, within the confines of a trio of marvellous national parks: the Hardangervidda, a vast mountain plateau of lunar-like appearance; the Rondane, with its bulging mountains; and the Jotunheimen, famous for its jagged peaks. Of these three, the first is most easily approached from Finse or Rjukan, the others from the comely town of Otta. Nudging the Skagerrak, the south coast is different again. This island-shredded shoreline is best appreciated from the sea, though its pretty, old whitewashed ports are popular with holidaying Norwegians; the pick of these towns is Mandal, proud possessor of the country's finest sandy beach. Away to the north, beyond Trondheim, Norway grows increasingly wild and inhospitable across the Arctic Circle and on the way to the workaday port of Bod. From here, ferries shuttle over to the rugged Lofoten

Islands, which hold some of the most ravishing scenery in the whole of Europe - tiny fishing villages of ochre- and red-painted houses tucked in between the swell of the deep blue sea and the severest of grey-green mountains. Back on the mainland, it's a long haul north from Bodø to the iron-ore town of Narvik, and on to Tromsø. These towns are mere urban pinpricks in a vast wilderness that extends up to Nordkapp, or North Cape. The northernmost accessible point of mainland Europe, the Cape is the natural end of this long trek, and it's here that the tourist trail peters out. But Norway continues east for several hundred kilometres, right the way round to remote Kirkenes near the Russian border, while inland stretches an immense and hostile upland plateau, the Finnmarksvidda, one of the last haunts of the Sami (Lapp) reindeer-herders. When to go Choosing when to go to Norway is more complicated than you might expect. The summer season - when the midnight sun is visible north of the Arctic Circle - is relatively short, stretching roughly from the beginning of June to the end of August. Visit out of season, and you'll find that tourist offices, museums and other sights have reduced hours, hotels withdraw their generous summer discounts, and buses, ferries and trains run on less frequent schedules. Nevertheless, late May does have its attractions, especially if your visit coincides with the brief Norwegian spring, though this is difficult to gauge. Springtime is especially beguiling in the fjords, with myriad cascading waterfalls fed by the melting snow, and wildflowers in abundance. Come before that - from late March to early May - and you're likely to encounter the unprepossessing residue of winter, when the last snow and ice lies soiled on the ground, asphalt dust from studded tyres pollutes city air and the landscape is blankly colourless. Autumn is a much better bet, with September often bathed in the soft sunshine of an Indian summer. There are also advantages to travelling during the winter, providing you steer well clear of the winter solstice, when the lack of light depresses even the Norwegians, and aim instead for early February up to mid-March. The big incentive to visit at this time of year is the range of winter sports - from ice-fishing to dog-sledging and, most popular of all, cross-country and alpine skiing. There are skiing packages to Norway from abroad, but perhaps more appealing - and certainly cheaper - is the ease with which you can arrange a few days' skiing wherever you happen to be. Furthermore, if you are equipped and hardy enough to reach the far north, between November and February there's an above average chance of seeing the phenomenal northern lights (Aurora Borealis) beyond the Arctic Circle, and a possibility of glimpsing them as far south as Oslo, too.