

# WILD PHOTOGRAPHY HOLIDAYS



## LOFOTEN ISLANDS

LANDSCAPES, FISHING VILLAGES & BIRDS IN THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

### HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE...

- Unique ambient light
- Gannet & Cormorant colony
- Sea Eagles
- Wild beaches
- Stunning turquoise fjords
- Striking snow capped mountains
- New leafed trees
- Picturesque fishing villages
- Boat trips
- Traditional Norwegian architecture
- Traditional coastal accommodation

### INTRODUCTION

Lofoten is an archipelago off the north west coast of Norway well known for their natural beauty, rugged landscape and unique light. Nowhere does the sun shine to greater effect than on these northern islands. Anchored above the Arctic Circle the purple mountains, green meadows, bright fishing boats and rust-red cottages on stilts are mirrored in a Caribbean-blue sea, consequently the islands have long proved inspirational for artists and photographers. Though lying within the Arctic Circle, the archipelago experiences one of the world's largest elevated temperature anomalies relative to its high latitude, warm summers and mild winters. May and June are the driest months and the endless daylight makes for a perfect summer photo-

graphic destination. We have chosen to run these trips at the end of May and the beginning of June as there should still be some snow on the mountains although down by the coast spring will be under way. We will photograph throughout the day and night, as the 'golden hours' of ambient light are extensive. There will be chances to rest or take part in optional photography at times during the day; we will often go out in the long evenings. There will be lots of opportunities for bird photography as Lofoten has a very high density of Sea Eagles, Cormorants, Gannets and millions of other sea birds.

This year we have extended the trip by a day to allow us some extra time in the gorgeous area of Reine, one of Lofoten's most photogenic spots. We have spread the trip



over two bases designing our itinerary with great care to allow participants to see as many first rate Lofoten photographic locations as possible. We have also added one night in the pretty village of Henningsvær. The distances travelled are relatively short, just two and half-hours from Svolvær to Reine with no stops. However, photographic stops are high on our list of priorities so our journeys generally take much longer! The boat trips we enjoy allow for a diversity of locations. This typically pushes up the cost but we consider that the end result is well worth some extra expense; after all most photographers will only visit once and want to experience as much as possible in a limited time frame. As the daylight is 24 hours we will often be photographing at unusual times and are more likely to take rests during the daytime.

## FULL ITINERARY

### Day 1: Arrival in Lofoten

Participants will arrive in Svolvær during the day by plane or ferry from Bodø. The ferry takes around three hours and is very scenic; Whales are often spotted. This way of trav-

elling will mean that you arrive in Svolvær quite late on day 1. Better to come a day earlier if this method of travel is chosen. The flight from Bodø to Svolvær takes around half an hour. On Day 1 we arrange pick-ups and transfers to our accommodation on the seafront in Svolvær. In the early evening at 18.30 we meet for introductions, a trip briefing and dinner. Following dinner we leave for an evening to midnight road trip on north side of the Austvåg Island to photograph some beautiful bays and inlets. Hotel Svolvær (D)

### Day 2: Trollfjorden and Sea Eagles

After breakfast we board our Zodiac and head out to the magnificent Trollfjorden, a dramatic steep sided fjord. This was once a busy fishing harbour due to its protection from the prevailing winds and weather. Troll Fjord is famous for the Battle of Troll Fjord, which took place here in 1880. The battle was between fishermen in steam-driven fishing boats and fishermen in boats with sails and oars for five oarsmen. The landscape is very spectacular. The boat trip gives us a great opportunity to photographing Sea Eagles at very close quarters! After lunch we ex-



plore Svolvær and it's surroundings. A key feature are the impressive flakes where row after row of cod hang to dry. They are located in an area comprising sea, derelict houses, fishing docks and sea birds; a very rich area for photography. This evening we will have an after dinner image presentation of our forthcoming locations. Hotel Svolvær (B, D)

### Day 3: Drive to Henningsvær Fishing Village

This morning we drive to Henningsvær. Located at the foot of Mount Vågakaillen the village consists of a group of isles and islets spread out at random in the blue waters of the Vestfjord. There are often gorgeous reflections of the bay with a mountain backdrop to make for some special images. After lunch we will explore the village and its surrounding area. Unlike many other fishing villages, the population of Henningsvær has remained stable in recent years, there are still over 500 people living there. The islands were not connected to the rest of Lofoten by bridges until 1981; this probably helped to save the community from a more normal contemporary style of



modern architecture. The combination of an active, vibrant environment and well-preserved architecture makes Henningsvær something quite unique.

Hotel Henningsvær (B, D)

#### **Day 4: Drive to Reine**

After a sunrise shoot and breakfast we drive to Reine. This road is perhaps one of the most scenic in the whole of Norway; our journey will be punctuated by several photography stops. We include a dramatic drive through impressive mountains to the tiny and scenic fishing village at Nusfjord one of Norway's most authentically preserved fishing villages. This is a little early for the main tourist season so we should hopefully have the place to ourselves. There is a Kittiwake colony, and many other seabirds have their nests in and around the wooden fishing Rorbua. There are often fabulous reflections in the Fjord. From Nusfjord we continue the journey to our converted

fishermen's Rorbua accommodation in the pretty village of Sakrisøy. This is our base until the end of our trip.

Rorbua Reine (B, L, D)

#### **Day 5–8: Reine**

During the five days we spend in Reine our accommodation is at the Sakrisøy Rorbua. Our cozy cottages have been restored from the original fishermen's Rorbua; all have fine views and verandas that look right out over the fjord. With its spectacular mountain backdrop, Reine is one of the loveliest and most photographed places in Lofoten. Our programme will be arranged around the prevailing weather conditions allowing us to make the very best of the varied locations that we have planned for you. Sunrise comes early at this time of the year and there are some spectacular images to be had overlooking Reine or indeed right from the front veranda of our accommodation! There will always be time for inspiring photography presentations and maybe for viewing & reviewing some of each other's photos to date. The beauty of staying in one base for five nights is the opportunity that it gives participants to re-work locations after reviewing previous images, a sure way to improve technical skills and compositional skills.

Rorbua Reine (B, L, D)

#### **LOCATIONS FROM REINE**

##### **Hamnøy**

This is a tiny idyllic fishing village surrounded by mountains that reflect dramatically in the sea. Hamnøy is right next to a 'drive-in bird cliff' like a crack in the rock where the calling Kittiwakes echo between mountain walls.



##### **Gannet Colony**

Late afternoon time we leave Reine in a Zodiac Rig for an inspiring trip around the southern tip of Lofoten to photograph Gannets and Cormorants at close quarters. We are virtually at the same level as the birds allowing us an intimate view of 'life on the rock' often a bit like a dramatic but comic soap opera! En route we sail through Moskenstraumen (The Maelstrom) a system of tidal eddies and whirlpools, some of the strongest in the world. The current attracts whales, seals and white tailed eagles.

##### **Vindstad**

We board the local ferry in Reine for a trip across the fjord to Vindstad. The scenery is stunning. Snow capped mountains rise steeply from the fjord and isolated fishing villages are reflected in glassy water. The boat will leave us in Vindstad. From here it's easy walking around the village or along the fjord. There are lots of traditional houses and



sea birds. For the energetic there is walk across a low ridge to the interesting Bunes beach (Bunesstranda) on the northwest side of the island. If the weather is fine we enjoy a picnic lunch by the fjord. We return by boat to the Reine fjord in time for sunset and dinner in a local restaurant.

### **Flakstad**

Located near the southern end of the Lofoten archipelago, Flakstad comprises all of the island of Flakstadøya and the northern part of the island of Moskenesøya. The Fredvang Bridges and Kåkern Bridge connect the islands. The large lake Solbjørnvatnet lies on the northern part of

Moskenesøya in Flakstad. This is a most striking area with mountains framing the classic white sand of Skagsanden beach. To the left of the beach are interesting rocks and to the right is Flakstad church. Lake Solbjørnvatnet is often home to Black Throated Divers. Hopefully we will be able to enjoy a BBQ on Skagsanden beach.

### **Utakleiv Beach, Vestvågøya**

North of Leknes is probably our furthest location. The left side of the beach is rocky, allowing you to get right up into the waves for some dramatic images and, more often than not, wet feet! The rocks here come in lovely smooth

shapes of round or oval. En route to Utakleiv is the bright white sand Haukland Beach.

### **Day 9: Transfers to Airport**

Following breakfast we transfer to the Leknes airport for the flight to Bodø and connecting international flights home.

(B)

### **WHAT'S INCLUDED**

- All accommodation 8 nights
- Meals 8 breakfasts, 8 dinners, 5 lunches
- Transport



- Airport transfers
- 3 boat trips
- Tuition

#### WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- International flights to Lofoten
- Alcoholic beverages
- Travel insurance

#### ACCOMMODATION

Our hotels in Svolvær and Henningsvær have double or single rooms all with private bathroom facilities.

In Reine we stay in scenic Rorbu cottages overlooking the fjord. Rorbus are traditional houses originally lived in by fishermen. Ours have been nicely restored with a cozy sitting room, and kitchen. There are normally 2 bedrooms in each Rorbu with one bathroom that is shared by the guests. Some have a wood burner.

#### FOOD

Most of the time we will eat dinner in local or hotel restaurants. Some days we will have a picnic lunch that will be eaten on location or at our accommodation. Breakfasts will always be in the beautifully restored dining room at our accommodation in Reine and at the hotel in Svolvær and Henningsvær. Dinners will be taken in a variety of local restaurants chosen to represent the local culture and cuisine. Please let us know when you book if you have any special dietary requirements.

#### ALCOHOL

This is rather expensive in Norway, during the holiday we can call at the local shop where wine and spirits are sold; it might be worth considering bringing a bottle of your favourite 'tipple'! Wine, beer and spirits are available in the restaurants where we eat. Beer is available in shops along the way.

#### SPENDING MONEY

At the time of writing (February 2016) there are around 13 NOK to 1 GBP. Norway is expensive; a soft drink might be 15 in a supermarket, 27 in a kiosk or 30 in a touristy place. There are supermarkets close to our bases where you can buy soft drinks/snacks etc.



#### TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is recommended that you take out appropriate insurance to cover personal accident, medical costs, death, repatriation and loss of baggage. We will need a copy of your travel insurance at the time of booking.

#### PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

Please check on the [UDI site](#) to see if you require a visa for Norway.

#### LANGUAGE

Norwegian (norsk) is a North Germanic language spoken primarily in Norway; it is the official language. English is widely spoken and understood.

#### CLIMATE

Considering their location north of the Arctic Circle Lofoten has the largest positive temperature anomaly in the world relative to latitude. This is a result of the Gulf Stream and its extensions: the North Atlantic Current and

the Norwegian Current. Røst and Værøy are the most northerly locations in the world where average temperatures are above freezing all year. May and June are the driest months, while October has three times as much precipitation.

### CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS

The best solution to temperature control is to have a number of layers available from lightweight thermal underwear through mid-layer insulation to a windproof jacket. If you have any questions feel free to contact us at anytime before the trip.

### SUGGESTED CLOTHING/EQUIPMENT

- Warm trousers
- Long sleeved thermal tops and leggings
- Long sleeved shirt/tee-shirt
- Light fleece/wool jumper
- Warm fleece type jacket
- A light down jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Warm socks
- Lightweight walking boots/shoes
- Light warm hat
- Gloves
- Casual clothes, jeans etc for hotel wear
- Sun cream, sunglasses & sun hat
- Shorts
- Small towel
- Small basic first aid & any personal medicines
- Small penknife



### PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT/INFORMATION

- Camera bag or backpack such as the Flipside or Trekker series designed by LowePro.
- Any extra equipment that doesn't fit in your camera bag/hand luggage will need to go in a hard case that can be put in the aircraft hold.
- A camera with interchangeable lenses such as a digital SLR or a compact system camera/mirrorless camera.
- A set of lenses to cover the whole range from wide-angle to telephoto, for example...  
For full-frame cameras: 16–35mm wide-angle, 24–105mm mid-range and a 70–300mm or longer tele zoom. For crop format cameras: 10–20mm wide-angle, 17–50mm mid-range and a 70–200mm or longer tele zoom.
- Spare camera (highly recommended)
- Sturdy tripod – not only useful for low light photography but also for accurate framing and composition of landscape and close-up images.
- Cable release – mechanical or electronic remote to avoid shake on long exposures.
- Neutral density, graduated filters and polariser, if you use these. At least one neutral density filter in the range of 4–6 stops would be a good addition to your kit.
- Lens cloth
- Sensor cleaning device (optional)
- Lightweight 'trekking' absorbent towel for drying cameras and equipment
- Rain cover for camera and camera bag.
- Sufficient memory cards for the whole holiday as it may not be possible to buy more during the trip.
- Film users should bring enough film, as it may not be possible to buy in many places.

- A laptop with the image editing applications of your choice, essential for checking and presenting images during the trip and for one-on-one sessions with the tutor. All of the places we stay in have Wi-Fi.
- Backup storage device (optional)
- Spare batteries and chargers
- All the electrical sockets are European two-pin, so you might need a travel plug adapter.

#### MAPS AND BOOKS

An excellent map is the 1:100.000 '[Lofoten Turkart](#)' from [Ugland/Nordeca](#). It covers the whole archipelago, and shows relevant tourist information and hiking trails. For serious hiking it is recommended to get one of the 1:50.000 maps in the same series.

#### LOFOTEN LINKS

[Visit Norway: Lofoten](#)

[Hurtigruten ferry to Lofoten and other destinations](#)

[Birding Norway](#)

[Some flowers of Norway](#)

[Lonely Planet Lofoten](#)

#### PARTNERS

Non-photographer partners will be very welcome. Although this is primarily a photography holiday we also visit some very beautiful and relaxing places. If any participants do not wish to join the walks/photographic sessions they will be able to relax in and around the accommodation. The cost will be the same for photographers and non-photographers.



#### MORE INFORMATION

We hope that this information has answered some of your questions about the holiday, It doesn't hope to answer everything. If you have any questions please get in touch.

#### BOOKING THIS HOLIDAY

Contact us [through our website](#), where you can also fill in the [online booking form](#), or phone +44 (0)1630 647828.

#### OUTDOOR TRAVEL

This is an outdoor travel holiday and the itinerary is dependent on the weather, local conditions and other variables. Wild Photography Holidays may use their discretion to change the itinerary should conditions dictate this; your health, safety and enjoyment will always be our primary concern when making such changes.

#### LINKS

View [images and information for this tour](#) on the website. Read about [our approach to teaching photography](#)

