

ENCORE:
Exploring Nordic Culture: an Original Rural Experience
21/22 – 28 September 2017



Telemark Canal - Shutterstock

In September 2017, a small group of food tourism & hospitality professionals will travel to Norway's rural Telemark region to learn about the cultural heritage, flavours, and sense of place which make up the area's visitor experience.

We invite you to join them.

Tell me more about the project

Over seven days you'll travel as part of a group of like-minded people from the UK, meeting some of Telemark's local entrepreneurs, food producers and tourism businesses. You'll learn their stories, their successes and some of the lessons they learnt along the way. And you'll share your experiences with them and each other.

Through visits to cultural attractions, accommodation, farmers and growers - you'll get a concentrated taste of the Telemark region of Norway.

During the week you'll be part of a group developing **Case Studies** on one of three main themes we've chosen for you to explore during the visit: **Hospitality Service; Business Innovation and Development; and Sense of Place Marketing.**

You may be involved in hospitality, tourism, education & training, food events & festivals or pioneering something innovative. Can you learn from your Norwegian and other UK counterparts? Can they learn from you?

Designed for busy yet innovative tourism and hospitality professionals like you, this cultural heritage focused programme is a chance to learn new skills, experience new ideas and meet new contacts.

Does it cost?

A project grant from the Erasmus+ European Programme means we can offer this amazing opportunity to 20 people who meet the eligibility criteria. If selected, each participant will have a substantial part of the costs covered for this 6 night/7 day visit – including flights, accommodation, transport, meals and admission fees – (in the region of €1600).

In return each participant's business, organisation or educational establishment will contribute £325 for the group travelling from London Gatwick Airport, and £350¹ for the group travelling from Edinburgh Airport. You will have some free time on Saturday, 23rd Sept during Epelfest where you will cover costs of your food/drinks/ activities while at this festival. Participants are responsible for their own travel costs to and from London Gatwick and Edinburgh airports.

Can I take part?

Yes, if you have one or more of the roles shown on the attached eligibility document, are willing to participate fully and you can attend the full week (attending the full seven days is a stipulation of the Erasmus+ funding rules).

If you are interested, and excited by the prospect of bringing knowledge back to your tourism organisation/destination, educational establishment or business, please complete the eligibility document and send it to Karen Donnelly at karen@karendonnelyassociates.com by **10 March 2017**.

¹ To co-ordinate flight times the Edinburgh group is required to travel the night before the visit gets underway, and additional hotel accommodation at Oslo Airport has been included in your participation cost.

What happens next?

We will notify successful applicants by Monday 20 March, at which point we will make all bookings, accommodation & travel reservations on your behalf. We will confirm the final programme; send you a package of pre-visit materials and a full list of participants before we leave. Please be aware that if you subsequently drop-out having accepted a place in writing, you are liable for all costs incurred on your behalf. We strongly urge you to arrange appropriate travel insurance following written acceptance.

What to expect?

If you've never taken part in an exchange study visit it's a wonderful opportunity to see things from a new perspective, to gain practical knowledge, new contacts and new experiences to apply in your place of work. It's no holiday – but there is plenty of time for visiting places that will inspire a return trip one day. Take a look at the outline programme we've put together and if it's of interest please complete the attached application form.



Previous study visit participants in South Iceland, North Iceland and Wallonia Belgium.

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OUTLINE PROGRAMME

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- Thu 21 Sep:** Travel from Edinburgh Airport to Oslo (10 people).
(Depart Edinburgh: 21.10 Arrive Oslo: 23.55)
B&B Accommodation: Radisson Blu Oslo Airport
- Fri 22 Sep:** Travel from London Gatwick Airport to Oslo (10 people).
(Depart Gatwick: 09.20 Arrive Oslo: 12.25)
- Both groups meet and travel to Bø by train (Departing: 13.43)
Bus to meet group at Station and transfer to [Beverøya Cabins](#)
Check in to Cabins
Group meeting at [Beverøya Cabins](#)
Dinner - Pizza restaurant in Bø
Accommodation – [Beverøya Cabins](#)
- Sat 23 Sep:** Breakfast at Cabins
09.00-11.00 Case study time (in cabins).
11.00 Visit [Eplefest 2017](#)
Site Visit - tbc
19.00 Dinner – [Bø Hotel](#)
Accommodation – [Beverøya Cabins](#)
- Sun 24 Sep:** Breakfast at Cabins
09.00 Depart for Rauland
Visit to [Lega](#) Goat Cheese Farm
Visit to the University College of Southeast Norway
Workshop & Case study groups at University
Lunch
Visit to [The Hardangervidda National Park Centre](#)
Light meal – Notodden
Accommodation - [Beverøya Cabins](#)
- Mon 25 Sep:** Breakfast at Cabins
Check out of Beverøya
[Evju Bygdetun](#) – an interesting and lively local museum
in Mid-Telemark – focus on slow food
Check in to [Norsjø Hotel](#)
19.30 Dinner - hotel
Accommodation – [Norsjø Hotel](#)
- Tues 26 Sep:** Breakfast
09.00-12.00 Seminar: 3 Norwegian & 3 UK presenters
12.00-13.30 Lunch
14.30-16.30 Visit to [Lindheim Microbrewery](#)
Visit to [Gvarv frukt og baer](#)
Free time/return to accommodation
19.30 Dinner - hotel
Accommodation – [Norsjø Hotel](#)

Wed 27 Sep:

Breakfast
09.00-12.00 Workshop & Case study groups
12.00-13.30 Visit(s) to relevant businesses – [Galleri Nyhuus Farm](#)
Lunch – [Aarnes Kafeteria](#)
14.30-16.30 Visit to [Heddal Bygdetun](#)
19.30 Dinner - hotel
Accommodation – [Norsjø Hotel](#)

Thurs 28 Sep:

Departures back to the UK.
Check out of Norsjø Hotel and transfer to Bo train station
Train to Oslo Airport (Departing: 10.27 or 12.27 *if poss*)
(Edin flight: Depart Oslo: 19.50 Arrive Edinburgh: 20.40)
(Gatwick flight: Depart Oslo: 18.45 Arrive: Gatwick 20.05)

Feedback from previous participants

“The collective working of the businesses we met has been inspirational”

“Initially, I wasn't too sure what to expect - by the end of the trip I was really impressed. There were some truly amazing experiences, and opportunities for personal development. Everything we were put into was engaging and well thought out.”

“I will never forget the experiences and opportunity that this amazing trip gave me”

“I plan to develop links with academic members to help with skills shortages in my area”

“The trip exceeded my expectations in terms of networking and relationship building. I didn't expect it to have the impact it did on how I view my own destination.”

“It offered me new way of looking at some of the marketing challenges that face small businesses.”