

Quest Program **NORWAY**



The kingdom of Norway is a

constitutional monarchy in Northern Europe that occupies the western portion of the Scandinavian Peninsula. It is a beautiful country with deep blue fjords and high mountains. The Norwegians are very proud of their country, which is why the national holiday, May 17th, is a day of festivities. Norwegians are known for their friendly nature and good sense of humor.

Norway – “The land of the midnight sun”

Norway is the land of the midnight sun, the land of elks and reindeer, and the land of “lusekofter” – warm, wool sweaters, knitted in beautiful traditional designs.

The “lusekofter” are important here, since much of Norway is located north of the Arctic Circle. The word Norway itself means “the way to the north.”

Norway shares a border with Russia, Finland and Sweden to the east, and borders the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Norway is a country of extremes, ranging from the rugged mountains to the solemn fjords. In the north, you can experience the midnight sun in June and 24 hours of darkness in December. Mountains and sea dominate this country on the western edge of the Scandinavian Peninsula. The coast is punctuated by fjords, which can be as deep as 3,700 feet, and dotted with islands.

School Life

Norwegians start school at the age of six and are required to stay in school for 13 years. The school year is divided into two semesters. Much like the US system, the fall semester starts in August and ends in December and the spring semester starts in January and ends in June. High school consists of three years, and is a preparation for higher education. The students have a certain number of compulsory subjects, such as math, English, Norwegian, history and social science, but can also choose from a range of elective subjects depending on their interests. Students select from several “educational programs,” for example natural science, social science, language (English, French, German or Spanish is offered at

Norway Statistics

Location: Northern Europe, Scandinavia
Area: 149,405 square miles
Inhabitants: 4.7 million
Capital: Oslo
Language: Norwegian
National Day: May 17
Celebrities: AHA, Lene Marlin, Marion Ravn, Kurt Nilsen

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A nonprofit corporation committed to advancing intercultural educational student exchange.

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most schools), business & economics, aesthetics, media and communication, etc.

The relationship between teachers and students is usually friendly and informal. Students in their final year of high school are referred to as «russ». These soon-to-be graduates tend to make themselves heard and seen in the community throughout the year and especially in the spring. Dressed in red, black or blue, the “russ” have their special cars, clothes, whistles, etc. They participate in a number of activities such as trips, parties, shows, and parades. Although it’s a year of celebration, students continue to study hard for their final exams.

It is sometimes difficult to place exchange students in Norwegian schools because there are many exchange organizations who want to place students and only so many schools. Exchange students should be open and thankful to the school when placed. Special demands must be dealt with sensitively by the Quest office and we cannot guarantee that we will meet them.

Grades in Norway range from 1-6, where higher numbers represent better performance. School normally starts at eight or nine o’clock in the morning, and ends between one and four in the afternoon. Schools normally offer sports activities after school. Transportation to school varies. Sometimes schools will provide a free bus service, while in other cases students will have to pay for their own transportation. For lunch, most schools have a cafeteria where students may purchase food, but it is common for Norwegian students to bring their own lunch to school.

Exchange students should prepare for a rigorous workload, depending on their command of the Norwegian language. Quest recommends that

students study at least a basic level of Norwegian in their home country before arriving in Norway. Previous language study will help students follow class lectures and make Norwegian friends more easily. It is also important that students attend all classes, complete homework and respect their teachers and fellow students.

Host Family Life

All host families are screened before a student moves into a home. Norwegian families all over the country open up their homes and volunteer as host families. Therefore, host families might live near the southern archipelago, the northern aurora lights, the western fjords and glaciers, or the capital city of Oslo.

The average Norwegian family consists of a mother, father and two children. Compared to some US families, Norwegian families are not very religious. Norwegian families usually only go to church on holidays such as Christmas or Easter. Norway is more accepting of untraditional family structures these days. Divorce has become more common, and society is more accepting of a mother or father raising children alone. It has also grown more acceptable for a woman to have children out of wedlock or a couple to live together before marriage.

Everyday life in Norway is busy with work, school and activities. Families try to spend as much time together as possible. They usually manage to at least have dinner together everyday. Most Norwegian children are taught to be independent and participate in making decisions from an early age. A typical Norwegian upbringing places less emphasis on obedience and discipline, and more emphasis on being active, independent and creative. Exchange students should be able to help out in the host family’s home like all other family members. It is

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important for an exchange students to show the host family initiative to help out, as that is the expectation. The Norwegian everyday lifestyle will require that exchange students plan to spend around 1,500 – 3,000 NOK per month.

Hobbies

In general, Norwegians are very fond of sports and the outdoors. Soccer is a big sport among boys as well as girls. Handball is another very popular sport in many communities. Students who enjoy tennis, golf, basketball, volleyball or ice hockey, will have no problem finding teammates. In the winter, skiing is a very popular weekend activity, while boating and swimming take up a lot of people's time during the summer.

In addition to sports clubs, there are many organizations and clubs for those interested in music, singing, dancing, drama, arts and crafts. Norwegians enjoy getting together for celebrations, both in public and in their homes. When hitting the town, young people tend to go to youth clubs, dance clubs, movie theatres and concerts.

Program Extras

Since the group of exchange students in Norway is quite small, much of the group attends the offered side trips and students have a change to become very close with one another.

Oslo Trip

During the fall semester, Quest offers students a chance to spend two days in Oslo. On the first day, we organize a bowling and pizza social gathering with Norwegian students and other exchange students. On second day, students are taken sightseeing around Oslo and have dinner at the Hard Rock Café.

Trondheim Trip

During the spring semester, we offer students a chance to spend two days in Trondheim, which is the third biggest city in Norway. Students will spend time together at a social event and see famous places such as the Nidaros Cathedral, Munkholmen island and the Kristiansten fortress.

Hiking Trips

Quest teams up with the Norwegian Trekking Association to arrange a hiking tour for students. We offer trips in a range of different locations, for example, Jotunheimen, Rondane and Hardangervidda. Youth group have set up base camps around Norway, at which students can go rafting, rock climbing, canoeing, ice fishing and much more. Our hiking trips are available throughout the year.

Snow Day

Depending on the density of students in one area, we also host a "Snow Day" during the winter. During this event, students can try out cross-country and down hill skiing, snowboard, sliding and other Norwegian snow games.

European Tour

At the end of June, Quest offers a three-week bus tour around Europe. Students get to visit 10 countries together with other students from all over the world. The price includes accommodations, half board, sightseeing, most entrances and activities, Disneyland in Paris and more. Please ask for more detailed information regarding the tour.