

Flåm

Aurland · Norway

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Flåm is a tiny village at the head of the Aurlandsfjord, one of the innermost arms of the great Sognefjord in western Norway. Just under 300 people live here year-round, yet the village draws almost 450,000 visitors a year, many arriving on the cruise ships that call at its harbor through the summer. Most travelers come for a single reason: the train ride down from the mountains to the water's edge.

Flåm suits a short, focused visit rather than a long stay. A day or two is enough to ride the railway, walk the village, and take a fjord cruise, making it a natural stop on a longer Norway itinerary between Oslo and Bergen rather than a destination to linger in for a week.

When to visit

Summer (June to August) is mild and bright, with long daylight hours, and by far the busiest season. Spring and early autumn are quieter and cooler, with waterfalls often fullest during spring snowmelt, while winter is cold and dark with reduced boat and train schedules. Flåm has no single headline festival to plan around; instead, the main scheduling factor is cruise-ship traffic, which can briefly crowd the pier and platform around midday on the busiest summer days — arriving early or late in the day gives a calmer visit.

Top sights

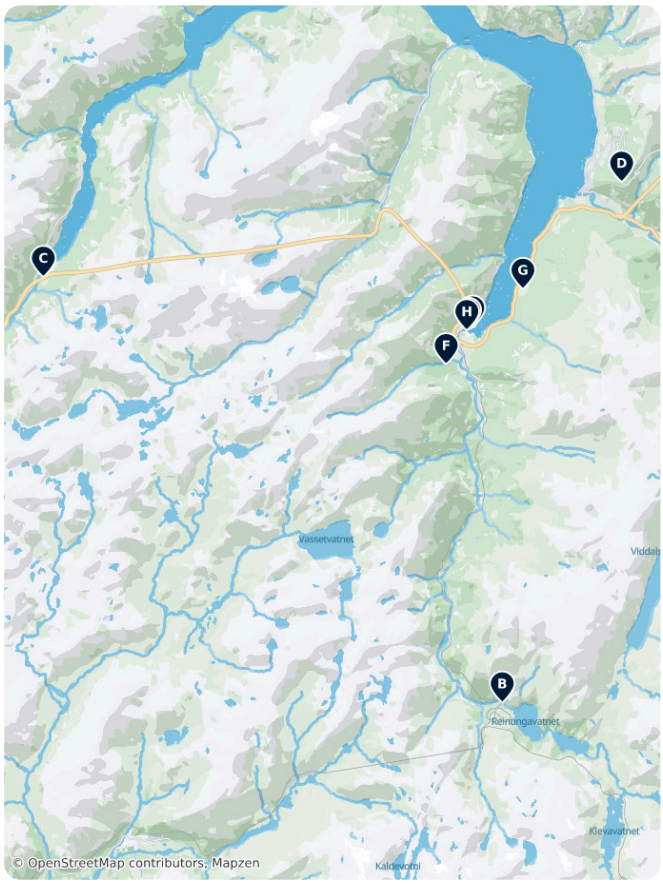
Ⓐ The Flåm Railway is the reason most travelers come to Flåm: a 20-kilometer mountain railway that descends steeply from Myrdal, through tunnels and past waterfalls, to the fjord below.

Partway down, the train stops for a few minutes at Ⓑ Kjosfossen, a thundering waterfall viewed from a platform right beside the tracks, where a folklore performance sometimes plays during summer.

From Flåm's harbor, fjord cruises sail down the Aurlandsfjord into the neighboring Ⓒ Nærøyfjord, a UNESCO World Heritage-listed arm of the fjord system, with mountainsides that rise almost straight out of the water.

For a wider view, Ⓓ Stegastein is a cantilevered viewing platform overlooking the Aurlandsfjord from high above, reachable by a short drive from the village.

In the village itself, Ⓔ Ægir Brewery is a distinctive brewery and pub built to evoke a Viking-age longhouse, with dragon carvings and a stave-church-style roof.



A short walk up the valley leads to F Brekkefossen, a waterfall reached by a steep trail with stone steps, opening onto a viewpoint over the village and fjord.

A few kilometers away, G Otternes Farmyard is a cluster of some two dozen wooden farm buildings dating to the 1700s, preserved as a protected heritage site with fjord views.

Back near the station, H Flåm Railway Museum tells the story of how the railway itself was built, a useful stop before or after the ride.

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What to experience

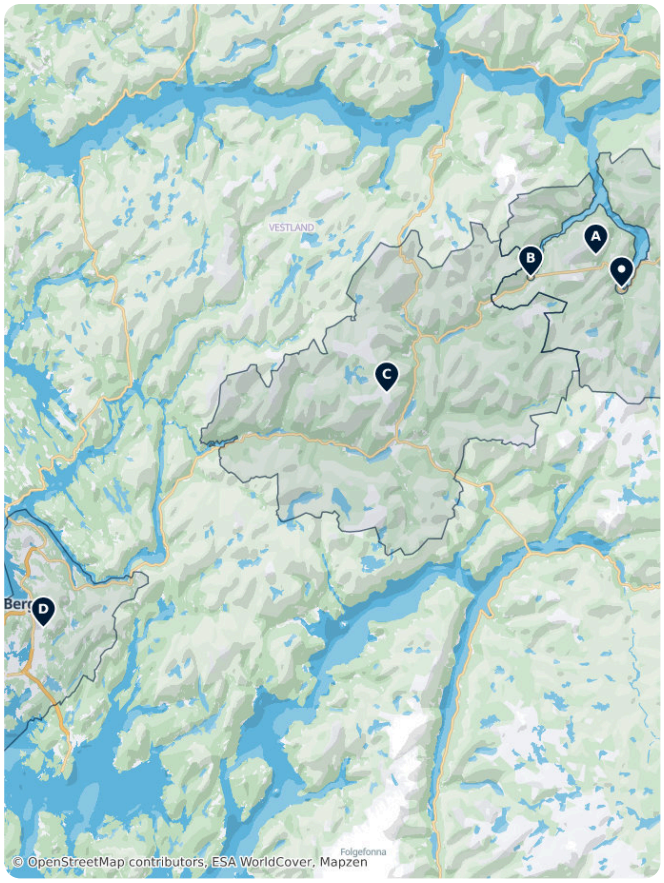
Flåm's setting between mountains and fjord invites a few active, seasonal ways to experience the landscape beyond simply looking at it.

- **Cycle down from the mountains.** Rent a bike at Myrdal or one of the railway's intermediate stops and ride the old construction road, the Rallarvegen, down through the valley to Flåm, following the route the railway builders once used.
- **Take a fjord safari.** In summer, small open RIB boats run faster, closer-to-the-water trips on Nærøyfjord and the Aurlandsfjord, a livelier alternative to the standard sightseeing ferry.
- **Paddle the fjord.** Guided kayak trips on the calm waters near the village let visitors get close to the shoreline and waterfalls at their own pace.

Day trips

Flåm's location on the fjord makes it a natural base for exploring the surrounding valleys and villages, most of them reachable by boat or a short drive.

- **Undredalen** — about 15 minutes by car, or 40 minutes by the scenic passenger ferry, this hamlet of fewer than 100 people is home to the smallest stave church in Northern Europe and a well-known goat cheese tradition.
- A Aurland — about 15 minutes by car or bus, the municipality's main town has a historic church and is the starting point for the road up to Stegastein.
- B Gudvangen — about 2 hours each way by fjord cruise boat through the Nærøyfjord (many visitors cruise one way and return by connecting bus in about an hour), this small village marks the other end of one of Norway's most scenic boat routes.
- C Voss — around 1.5 hours by train via Myrdal, this mountain town is a center for whitewater rafting, paragliding, and other adventure sports.
- D Bergen — a flagship day trip at around 3 hours by express bus, or closer to 4 hours by connecting train and the Flåm Railway (or the full "Norway in a Nutshell" rail-and-fjord-boat route), Norway's second city rewards a full day with its old wharf and surrounding fjords.



Where to explore

The closest related destination to Flåm is Gudvangen, a small village at the far end of the Nærøyfjord. It is best known as the terminus for fjord cruises that depart from Flåm, and as a stop on the scenic road and cruise route linking the region's villages.

Getting there

- **By air**: The nearest airport with scheduled commercial flights is Bergen Airport, Flesland (BGO), around 170 km away; reaching Flåm from there takes roughly 3.5 to 4.5 hours by a combination of airport bus, onward bus or train, and the Flåm Railway. Oslo's main airport, Gardermoen (OSL), connects via the Bergen Line and the Flåm Railway, a journey of around 6 to 7 hours in total.
- **By train**: The Bergen Line, linking Oslo and Bergen, stops at Myrdal, where the Flåm Railway branches off and descends to the village — this connection is the classic way most visitors arrive. Book tickets through Vy, Norway's national rail operator.
- **By car**: The E16 highway links Flåm to both Bergen (around 2.5 hours) and Oslo (around 5 hours), passing through the Lærdal Tunnel, the longest road tunnel in the world.
- **By boat**: Flåm is one of Norway's busiest cruise-ship ports, with around 160 calls a year and as many as three ships in port on the busiest summer days; passenger ferries also connect the village to Gudvangen and other fjord communities.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The village center is small enough to cross in a few minutes on foot; the railway station, harbor, and most sights within Flåm itself are all within easy walking distance of each other.
- **Public transit**: A local bus connects Flåm with Aurland and Lærdal for those without a car; buy tickets from the driver or through Skyss, the regional transit operator's app.
- **Bicycle**: Renting a bike to ride the gravel road down from the mountains into the valley is a popular way to see the surrounding landscape at a slower pace.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The village center is small and easy to explore on foot; getting to viewpoints and trailheads outside it takes transport.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The scenic descent from the mountains is popular for cycling, but there is little dedicated cycling infrastructure within the village itself.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Not for Flåm itself — the village is small and walkable, and the railway is the main attraction. A car becomes useful for exploring the wider fjord region at your own pace, including Stegastein and nearby valleys.
- **Parking**: Pay-and-display lots sit near the railway station and harbor; expect them to fill up on the busiest cruise-ship days.
- **Routes**: The E16 approach from the east passes through the Lærdal Tunnel; allow extra time in summer for slow-moving traffic on the narrower fjordside roads.

Food & drink

Eating out in Flåm centers on a handful of places near the harbor and station, most serving Norwegian staples like salmon and reindeer alongside simpler cafe fare for travelers passing through between train and boat.

Ægir Brewery stands out as the village's one genuinely distinctive dining spot, a brewery and pub with its own beers and a striking timber interior. For a quick bite between connections, the cafes around the station and quay serve waffles, sandwiches, and coffee to the steady flow of travelers.

What to eat & drink

DINNER

Fårikål
Lamb and cabbage stew simmered with whole peppercorns; widely regarded as Norway's national dish, especially in autumn.

Cured salmon · Gravlaks
Salmon cured in salt, sugar, and dill, served thinly sliced with a mustard-dill sauce.

Fermented fish · Rakfisk
Trout fermented for months, eaten cold with flatbread, sour cream, and onion. A strong-smelling acquired taste.

Dried salted cod · Klippfisk
Cod salted and air-dried, then rehydrated and cooked into stews such as bacalao.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Brown cheese · Brunost
A caramel-colored whey cheese with a sweet, slightly tangy flavor, typically sliced thin onto bread or waffles.

Potato flatbread · Lefse
A soft flatbread made from potato, rolled up with butter and sugar or cinnamon.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Waffles · Vafler
Heart-shaped, thin waffles served with sour cream and jam, a common café treat.

DRINKS

Caraway spirit · Akevitt
A potato-based spirit flavored with caraway and other spices, traditionally aged in oak sherry casks and served at holidays.

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Safety & health

Flåm is a low-crime destination, and violent crime is essentially unheard of. The main practical risks are environmental rather than criminal: keep an eye on children and belongings in the crowds around the pier and platform when a cruise ship is in port, and wear sturdy shoes on the steeper trails to viewpoints like Brekkefossen, which can be slippery when wet.

History

Flåm's name and its harbor have long tied it to the fjord, but the village's modern shape comes from the early 20th century, when the The Flåm Railway was built to link the remote Aurland district to the rest of Norway's rail network. Construction was a major engineering effort, carving tunnels and track through terrain considered too steep for a conventional line.

Farming communities predate the railway by centuries: the cluster of historic buildings at Otternes Farmyard, dating to the 1700s, shows how families in this valley lived and worked, largely unchanged until the railway and, later, tourism reshaped the local economy.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Norway at a glance:

CURRENCY
NOK kr

ELECTRICITY

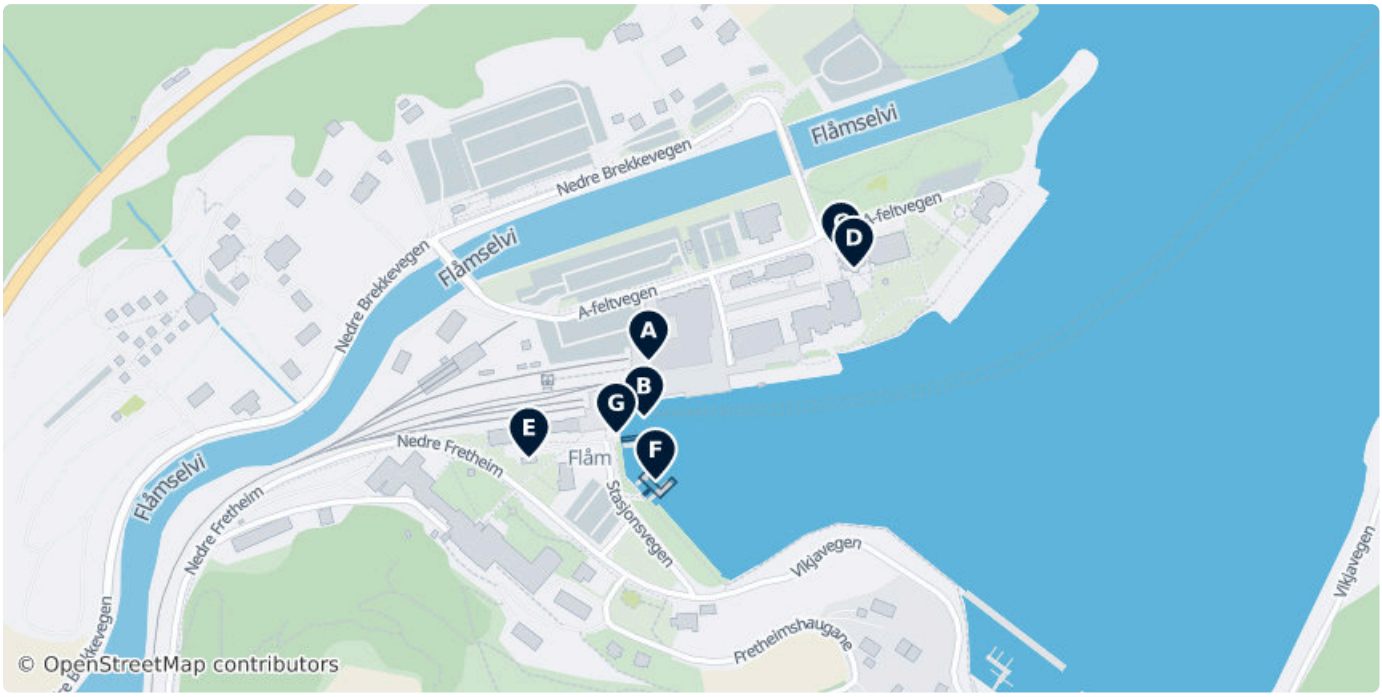
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230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Norwegian Bokmål, Norwegian Nynorsk

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Flåm Must-Sees

Flåm serves as the gateway to the Aurlandsfjord, a dramatic branch of the Sognefjord. The village is centered around the Flåm Railway, a 20.2-kilometer line climbing from sea level to 863 meters at Myrdal. Visitors can explore the UNESCO-listed Nærøyfjord by ferry or RIB boat, cycle the historic Rallarvegen mountain route, and experience local Norse-inspired architecture at the village's craft brewery and waterfront dining establishments.





A The Flåm Railway

The Flåm Line is a 20.2-kilometer long railway line between Myrdal and Flåm in Aurland Municipality, in Vestland county, Norway.

8 Stasjonsvegen, Flåm 5743, Norway (60.86308, 7.11453)

flamsbana.no, +47 57 63 14 00



B Flåm - Gudvangen ferry berth

Departure point for passenger and vehicle ferries traveling through the Aurlandsfjord and the UNESCO-listed Nærøyfjord toward Gudvangen.

8 Stasjonsvegen, Flåm 5743, Norway (60.86272, 7.11447)



C Ægir Brewery

Viking-style brewpub featuring a 9-meter high fireplace and hand-carved dragon heads. It produces craft beers using local mountain water.

23 A-Feltvegen, Flåm 5743, Norway (60.86379, 7.11711)

aegirbrewery.com

D Flåmsbrygga

Waterfront restaurant and hotel complex serving local cuisine inspired by Viking traditions, located adjacent to the Ægir brewery.

(60.86368, 7.11729)

E Rallarvegen

Rental service for cycling the historic Rallarvegen (Navvies' Road), a scenic mountain route originally built for the construction of the Bergen Line.

(60.86244, 7.11293)

F tender pontoon

Docking facility used by cruise ship tender boats for transporting passengers between anchored vessels and the Flåm harbor.

6 Stasjonsvegen, Flåm 5743, Norway (60.86230, 7.11463)

G Fjord Safari

Operation base for guided rigid inflatable boat (RIB) excursions through the narrowest branches of the Sognefjord.

8 Stasjonsvegen, Flåm 5743, Norway (60.86261, 7.11410)

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