

Stavanger

Rogaland · Norway

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Stavanger is a compact harbor city on Norway's southwest coast, built around a medieval cathedral and a well-preserved old town of white wooden houses. It is Norway's fourth-largest city, but feels far smaller: most sights sit within a 20-minute walk of the harbor.

Since oil was discovered in the North Sea in 1969, Stavanger has grown into Norway's energy capital, giving the city an international, prosperous character alongside its fishing-town roots. Most visitors use it as a base and gateway: it is the closest city to Pulpit Rock and the Lysefjord, so plan for a mix of city sightseeing and at least one day trip into the fjords.

When to visit

Summer (June to August) is mild and the best season for hiking and fjord trips, with long daylight hours. Spring and autumn are cooler and quieter. Winter is cold with short days, though rarely severe by Norwegian standards.

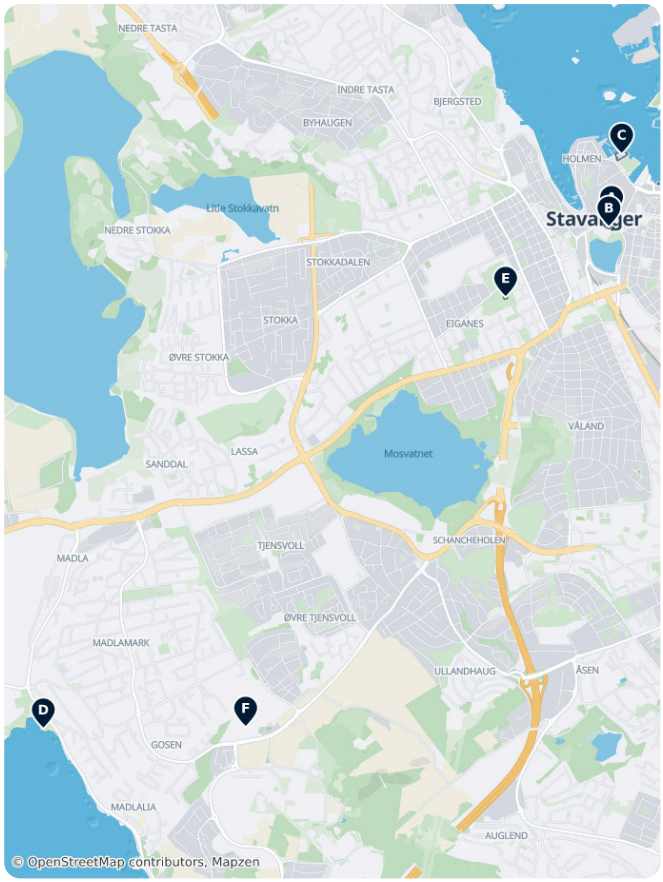
Rain is frequent here in every season, more so than in most of Norway — pack a waterproof jacket regardless of when you visit.

Time a trip around **Gladmatfestival**, one of Scandinavia's largest food festivals, held on the harbor front in late July with stalls from Norwegian and international chefs.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 8° Feels like -3°	1° / -6°	20 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 8° Feels like -2°	0° / -7°	18 rainy days · Dry air
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	5° / 9° Feels like 0°	1° / -5°	17 rainy days · Dry air
April	Poor Poor for hiking	8° / 14° Feels like 4°	4° / 0°	15 rainy days · Dry air
May	Fair Fair for hiking	12° / 18° Feels like 8°	7° / 3°	15 rainy days · Dry air
June	Good Good for hiking	15° / 20° Feels like 11°	10° / 7°	15 rainy days · Dry air
July	Fair Fair for hiking	17° / 22°	12° / 9°	18 rainy days · Dry air
August	Fair Fair for sightseeing	17° / 22°	13° / 10°	19 rainy days · Dry air
September	Fair Fair for hiking	15° / 19° Feels like 11°	11° / 7°	18 rainy days · Dry air
October	Poor Poor for hiking	11° / 14° Feels like 6°	8° / 3°	21 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for sightseeing	7° / 11° Feels like 2°	4° / -1°	20 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	5° / 9° Feels like -1°	2° / -5°	21 rainy days · Dry air

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



A Old Stavanger is the city's postcard image: cobbled lanes lined with around 250 restored 18th- and early 19th-century wooden houses, still lived in today.

B Stavanger Cathedral is Norway's oldest cathedral, consecrated around 1125 and still the seat of the Bishop of Stavanger. Its plain stone exterior hides an interior that mixes Romanesque and Gothic additions.

C The Norwegian Petroleum Museum explains how a fishing and canning town became Norway's oil capital after the North Sea discoveries of 1969, with full-scale rigs, simulators, and hands-on exhibits that work well for families.

D Sverd i fjell, three giant bronze swords driven into solid rock at Hafrsfjord, marks the site of the battle that first united Norway into one kingdom.

E Breidablikk is a shipowner's mansion from the 1880s, kept almost exactly as it was, offering a glimpse of the wealth the herring and canning trade brought to the city.

F Iron Age Farm is a reconstructed Iron Age farmstead built directly on its original archaeological site, with longhouses, open hearths, and live demonstrations of everyday life around 1,500 years ago.

For a quick detour, the short street of **Fargegaten** (Øvre Holmegate), just off the harbor, is lined with houses painted in bright, individual colors — a favorite spot for a photo.

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What to experience

- Join the crowds sampling seafood, waffles, and street food at **Gladmatfestival** if visiting in late July.
- Paddle a kayak or stand-up paddleboard across Vågen harbor or out into Hafrsfjord, near Sverd i fjell.
- Follow the coastal path along **Solastranden**, a long sand beach near the airport, on foot or by bike.
- Try a cold sea swim at one of the city's harbor bathing spots — a genuine local habit, not just a summer one.

Day trips

Stavanger's biggest draw is what lies just outside it — this is Norway's gateway to some of its most famous fjord scenery.

- **Flor og Fjære**: a subtropical flower garden on a small offshore island, reached by a short boat trip (about 20 minutes each way) from the harbor. An easy half-day out, best in summer.
- **Utstein Abbey**: Norway's best-preserved medieval monastery, on the island of Mosterøy, roughly 45 minutes from the city by car or bus.
- **Lysefjord cruise**: boats leave from the city harbor for a 2- to 4-hour round trip along the Lysefjord, passing beneath towering cliffs and waterfalls, with Pulpit Rock visible from the water.
- **The hike**: Pulpit Rock is Norway's most famous viewpoint, a flat cliff 604 meters above the fjord. Reachable by ferry to Tau and a bus to the trailhead, followed by a roughly 4-hour round-trip; allow a full day.

Getting there

- **By air**: Stavanger Airport, Sola (SVG) is about 14 km southwest of the center. The Flybussen airport bus and regular public buses both run the route in around 30 minutes.
- **By train**: The Sørland Railway runs direct to Oslo, a scenic but long journey of around 8 hours, with a night-train option. There is no direct train to Bergen — the usual route combines a train partway with a connecting bus, taking roughly 5 hours in total.
- **By bus**: Long-distance coaches connect Stavanger to Oslo, Bergen, and Kristiansand for travelers who prefer a single overland ticket.

Getting around

- **Public transit**: Kolumbus runs the city's buses. Buy tickets in advance through the Kolumbus app or load a Kolumbus travel card — you cannot tap a bank card when boarding, and paying cash on board costs extra. (Kolumbus)
- **Taxi / ride-hailing**: Uber and Bolt both operate in Norway's biggest cities, but coverage in Stavanger is patchy; a local taxi app such as Taxi Sør is the more reliable option here.
- **On foot / cycling**: The city center is small and flat enough to explore entirely on foot. Bike rental shops around the center make cycling an easy add-on.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The center is compact and flat enough to see entirely on foot.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Bike rental is available, though the wider region is hillier than the city center.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: No for the city itself — walk or use the bus. Yes if you plan to explore beyond Utstein Abbey or the wider Ryfylke fjord region at your own pace.
- **Parking**: Paid parking houses cluster around the center (e.g. near Jorenholmen and Byparken); pay by app (EasyPark) or at machines. Street parking is limited and metered.
- **Restrictions**: Stavanger sits inside the Nord-Jæren toll ring — cameras charge a fee automatically each time you enter, with no barriers or tickets to worry about.

Food & drink

Stavanger calls itself Norway's food capital, and the claim holds up: the surrounding waters supply excellent seafood, from fresh shellfish to the cured and dried fish that built the city's canning industry. Look for fish soup, langoustines, and smoked salmon on menus around town.

For a casual meal, head to the **fish market and harborside restaurants around Vågen**, where catch comes straight off the boats. For something more special, **RE-NAA** is a three-Michelin-starred restaurant built around Norwegian coastal ingredients — worth booking ahead if you want a splurge.

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

Stavanger is a safe city for travelers by international standards. Petty theft such as pickpocketing or bag-snatching can happen in crowded areas and on public transit, so keep valuables close. Violent crime against tourists is rare.

Tap water is safe to drink everywhere in the city.

History

Stavanger's history starts at Hafrsfjord, just southwest of the modern city, where a decisive naval battle around 872 AD is traditionally credited with uniting Norway's petty kingdoms under one king for the first time. The three giant swords of Sverd i fjell mark the site today.

Stavanger Cathedral, consecrated around 1125, made Stavanger a bishopric and one of Norway's oldest towns. For centuries it stayed a modest fishing and trading port, until the herring boom of the 19th century brought merchant wealth — visible today in mansions like Breidablikk — followed by a canning industry that once employed a large share of the city's workforce.

Everything changed again in 1969, when oil was discovered in the North Sea. Stavanger became the operational base for Norway's petroleum industry almost overnight, a transformation covered in detail at The Norwegian Petroleum Museum.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Norway at a glance:

CURRENCY
NOK kr

ELECTRICITY

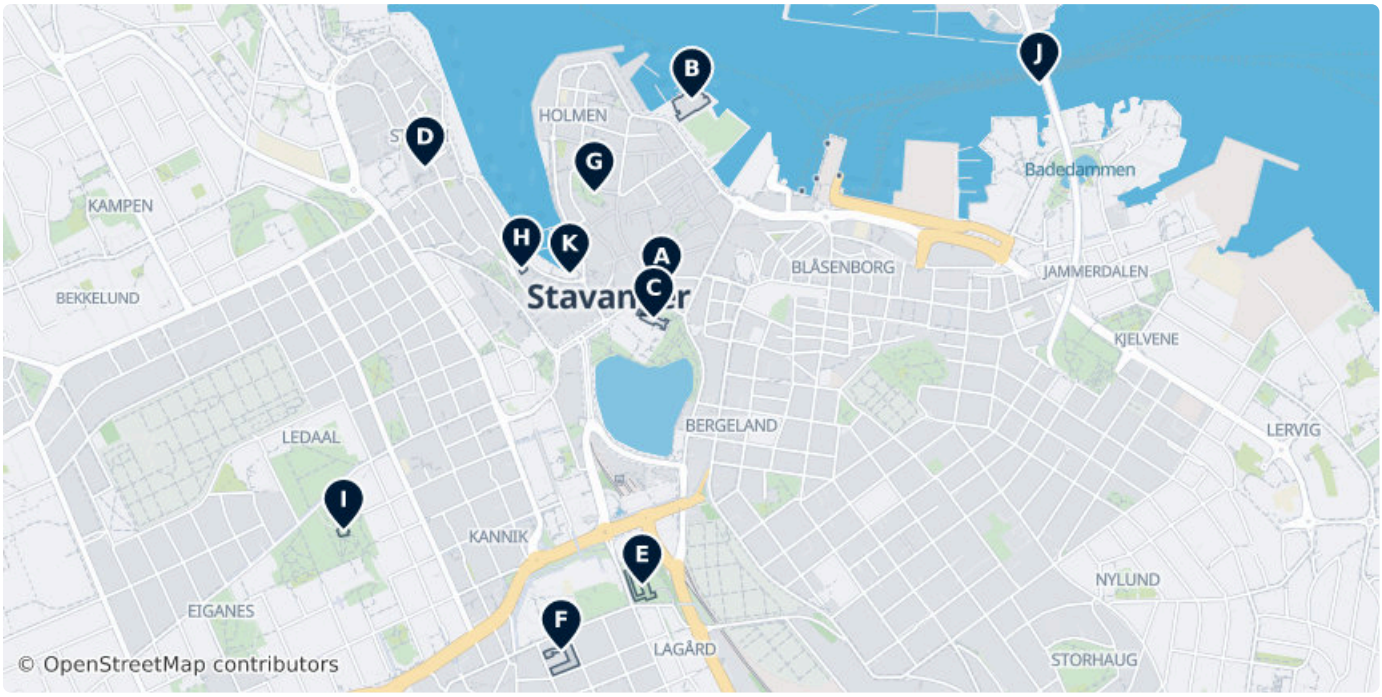
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Norwegian Bokmål,
Norwegian Nynorsk

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Stavanger Essentials

Stavanger combines medieval roots with industrial significance. This selection features the 12th-century Stavanger Cathedral and the preserved white wooden cottages of Gamle Stavanger. Explore the city's economic evolution through the Norwegian Petroleum Museum and the unique Canning Museum, housed in a former sardine factory. Cultural landmarks include the 1881 Breidablikk villa and the Valberg Tower, which served as a lookout for fires. The list also includes the harbor's fish market and museums dedicated to maritime history and archaeology.





A Old Stavanger

Gamle Stavanger is a historic area of the city of Stavanger in Rogaland, Norway.

3 Domkirkeplassen, Stavanger 4005, Norway
(58.97017, 5.73375)



B The Norwegian Petroleum Museum

The Norwegian Petroleum Museum is located in Stavanger, Norway.

Kjeringholmen 1, 4004 Stavanger, Norway
(58.97367, 5.73484)

Su 10:00–18:00

norskolje.museum.no, +47 51 93 93 00



C Stavanger Cathedral

Stavanger Cathedral is Norway's oldest cathedral and the seat of the Bishop of Stavanger who leads the Diocese of Stavanger in the Church...

2 Haakon VIIs gate, Stavanger 4006, Norway (58.96958, 5.73346)

kirken.stavanger.no



D The Norwegian Canning Museum

No matter how bizarre it sounds, this museum is well worth your attention: it is a preserved factory that once employed half of the city.

Øvre Strandgate 80, 4005 Stavanger, Norway (58.97240, 5.72517)

Mo–Su	10:00–16:00

iddis.no, +47 51 84 27 00



E Stavanger Museum

Stavanger Museum is a museum of natural and cultural history established in 1877, located in the Norwegian city Stavanger.

Musegata 16, 4010 Stavanger, Norway (58.96460, 5.73304)

Tu–Su	11:00–16:00

museumstavanger.no/home/, +47 51 84 27 00



F Museum of Archaeology Stavanger

Visit this museum to see fascinating archeological artifacts coming from different times of Norwegian history.

Peder Klows gate 10 A, 4010 Stavanger, Norway (58.96337, 5.73011)

Tu	11:00–20:00
We–Sa	11:00–15:00
Su	11:00–16:00

am.uis.no, +47 51 83 26 00

G Valbergtårnet

A former fire watchtower built between 1850 and 1853 on the city's highest point. It served as a lookout for the town's watchmen and now offers panoramic views of the harbor and surrounding city.

(58.97193, 5.73131)



H Stavanger Maritime Museum

Set in 18th and 19th-century waterfront warehouses, this museum documents 200 years of regional shipping, commerce, and shipbuilding through restored interiors and maritime artifacts.

22 Strandkaien, Stavanger 4005, Norway
(58.97052, 5.72867)

stavangermaritimemuseum.no, +47 51 84 27 00



I Breidablikk Museum

A well-preserved mansion built in 1881 for merchant and shipowner Bernt Holst. The villa features Swiss-style architecture, authentic Victorian interiors, and a landscaped park.

40A Eiganesveien, Stavanger 4009, Norway
(58.96563, 5.72222)

breidablikkmuseum.no



J Stavanger City Bridge

Stavanger City Bridge is a cable-stayed bridge in the city of Stavanger which is in the large Stavanger Municipality in Rogaland county,...

Stavanger - Tau, Norway (58.97398, 5.74744)

Fisketorget

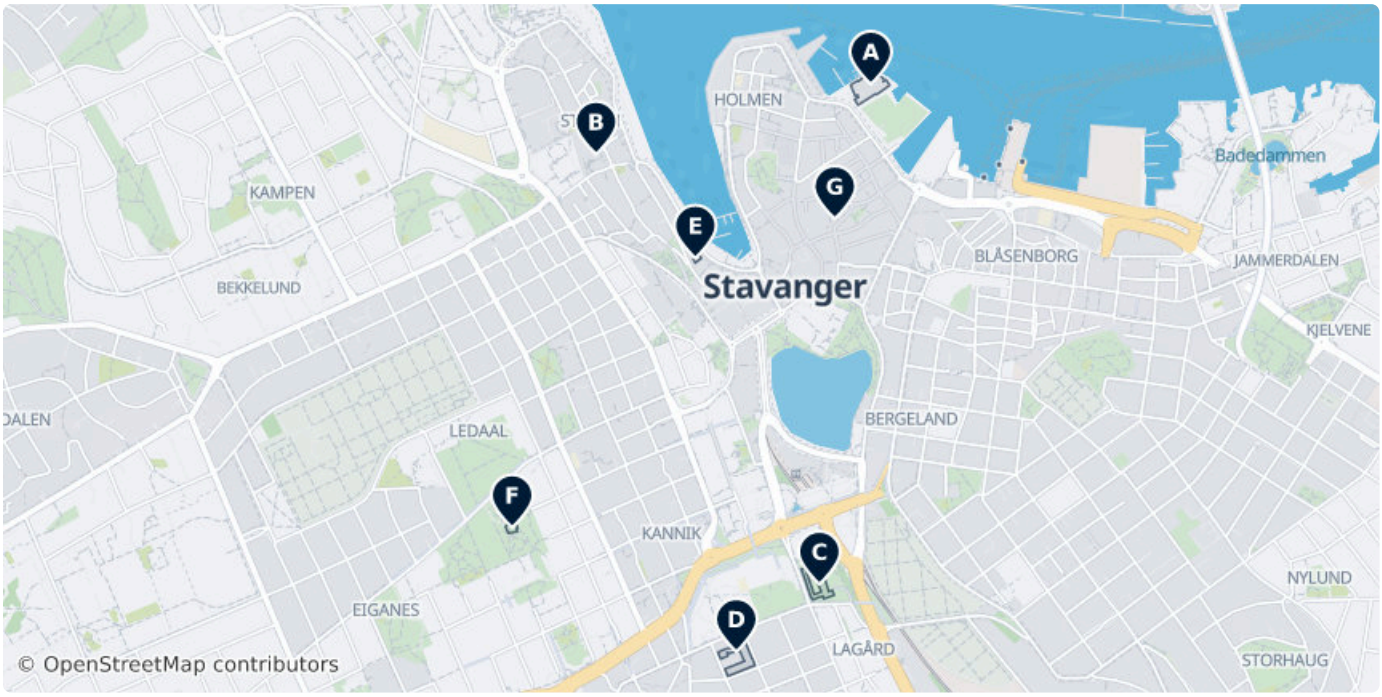
A central fish market and seafood restaurant located at the Vågen harbor, specializing in locally caught fish, shellfish, and seasonal Norwegian seafood.

1 Strandkaien, Stavanger 4005, Norway
(58.97041, 5.73041)

fisketorget-stavanger.no

Top Museums in Stavanger

Stavanger's museums document the city's transition from a maritime and canning center to a global petroleum hub. The Norwegian Petroleum Museum showcases offshore technology, while the Canning Museum occupies a preserved sardine factory. Cultural history is explored through the 19th-century Stavanger Museum and the Museum of Archaeology's regional artifacts. The collection also includes Breidablikk, an 1881 shipowner's mansion, the Maritime Museum's harbor-side warehouses, and the Norwegian Children's Museum's extensive toy collection.





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am.uis.no, +47 51 83 26 00



E Stavanger Maritime Museum

Located in restored 18th-century waterfront warehouses, this museum explores 200 years of regional maritime history through boat models, historic sailmaking tools, and a reconstructed traditional general store.

22 Strandkaien, Stavanger 4005, Norway (58.97052, 5.72867)

stavangermaritimemuseum.no, +47 51 84 27 00



F Breidablikk Museum

Built in 1881 for shipowner Bernt Sigvald Bergesen, this well-preserved mansion features original Victorian interiors, ornate woodwork, and period furnishings that reflect the lifestyle of Stavanger's 19th-century merchant class.

40A Eiganesveien, Stavanger 4009, Norway (58.96563, 5.72222)

breidablikkmuseum.no



Norwegian Children's Museum

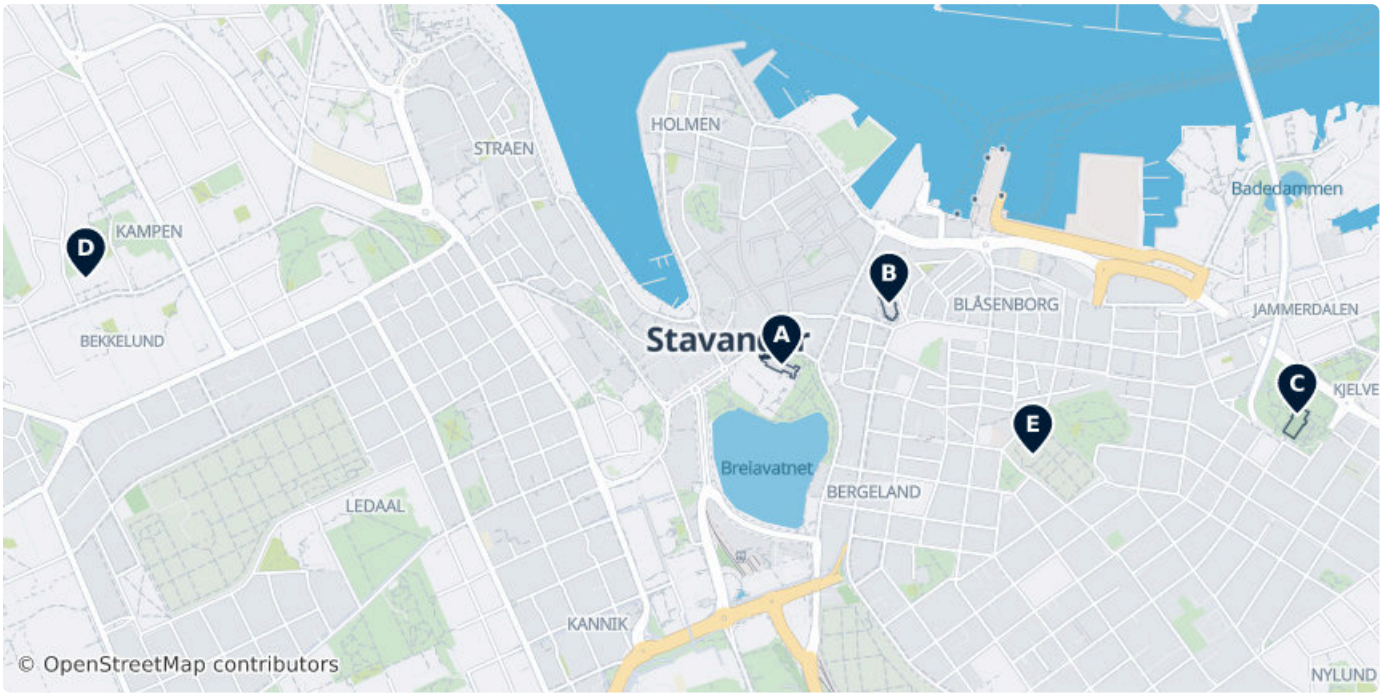
Visit the largest collection of toys in Norway. Not only are they on display, but children can actually play with some of them!

Sølvberggata 2, 4006 Stavanger, Norway
(58.97123, 5.73358)

museumstavanger.no/museums/the-nor... , +47 51 91 23 93

Historic Churches in Stavanger

Stavanger's religious history is anchored by the 12th-century Stavanger Cathedral, the oldest cathedral in Norway, featuring a blend of Romanesque and Gothic architecture. This selection includes prominent 19th and early 20th-century landmarks, such as the neo-Gothic red brick St. Petri kirke and the wooden Frue kirke. These sites illustrate the city's architectural evolution from medieval stone masonry to the neo-Gothic and wooden structures that characterize the Norwegian parish church tradition.





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2 Haakon VIIs gate, Stavanger 4006, Norway (58.96958, 5.73346)

kirken.stavanger.no

B St. Peter's Church

A neo-Gothic red brick church completed in 1866, designed by architect Conrad Fredrik von der Lippe. It serves as a prominent landmark in the city center with its distinct tall spire.

2 Nytorget, Stavanger 4012, Norway (58.97054, 5.73674)

C St. Johannes kirke

Located in the Storhaug district, this neo-Gothic stone church was consecrated in 1909. Designed by architect Hans Jacob Sparre, it features a traditional long church plan.

9A Høgsfjordgata, Stavanger 4014, Norway
(58.96881, 5.74923)

D Kampen kirke

Consecrated in 1920, this parish church serves the Kampen neighborhood.

47 Seehusens gate, Stavanger 4024, Norway
(58.97094, 5.71218)

E Frue kirke

Also known as Hetland Church, this wooden long church was built in 1854 based on designs by architect Hans Ditlev Franciscus Linstow. It represents the mid-19th-century Norwegian wooden church tradition.

2 Storhaugveien, Stavanger 4014, Norway
(58.96817, 5.74114)

kirken.stavanger.no

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