HARDANGER - mountains, fjords, waterfalls and glaciers

It's no secret that Hardanger is like a giant picture postcard and almost everywhere you look you will feast your eyes on thundering waterfalls or fruit trees in bloom. Everything you've ever heard about Hardanger is true. Dramatic roads run through dramatic scenery and there is a wealth of variation to absorb. The roads in Hardanger impose their own pace and you must adapt to the natural tempo. The road may follow a shelf along a steep-sided valley or it might literally pass through apple orchards; perhaps it is this closeness that is the unique quality of the stretch. Here the experience is in the drive.

The perfect holiday would be to drive in springtime at the height of the fruit blossoming season, stop to fish in the Hardangerfjord and then return when fruit picking is underway in late summer. Then Hardanger will reveal its unique aspects that change with the season and are all equally worth exploring.

TRAVEL INFORMATION. National Tourist Route Hardanger consists of four stretches: Granvin - Steinsdalsfossen (fv. 7), Norheimsund - Tørvikbygd (fv. 49), Jondal - Utne (fv. 550), and Kinsarvik - Låtefoss (rv. 13), a total distance of 158 km. A ferry operates between Tørvikbygd and Jondal and Kinsarvik - Utne - Kvandal.
**THE NATIONAL TOURIST ROUTES** comprise 18 selected motoring trips through natural surroundings in Norway. Viewing points and rest areas have been created along the routes employing innovative architecture and thought-provoking works of art. All of the 18 routes, from Jæren in the south to Varanger and in the north, have their own unique character in terms of the roads, the natural surroundings and history.

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**SKJÆRVSFOSSEN.** On the road between Granvin and Voss lies Skjærvsfossen with its twin falls plunging out from a height of 150 metres. A nature trail with paths and steps will provide a diversity of impressions of cascades and rapids will be completed in the summer of 2015. Architect: Fortunen. Landscape architect: Østengen & Bergo.

**STEINSTØBERGET.** The rest area at Steinstøberget occupies an idyllic spot with a view over the Hardagerfjord and the Folgefonna glacier. The area is built on two levels, with service facilities and outdoor furniture on the upper level. Down by the fjord there are good places to fish and opportunities to set up a barbecue. Architect: Tordis Hoem.

**STEINSDALSFOSSEN.** The Steindalsfossen waterfall is far from being Norway’s highest, but it is quite special all the same. Here you can walk behind the cascade without getting wet. The waterfall is at its fullest and most spectacular in May–June when the snow is melting. The tourist office is housed in the unusual building near the car park, and stays open during the entire summer season. Architect: Jarmund/Vigsnaes. Landscape architect: Grindaker.

**HEREIANE.** The rest area at Hereiane is located on the Folgefonna peninsula in an area where ice-scoured rocks and twisted pine trees reach from the fjord all the way up to the mountain peaks. The service building in the area is unique, combining old construction techniques, such as slate, with concrete and glass in strong colours. Architect: Asplan Viak og 3RW, Susanne Puchberger.

**LÅTEFOSS WATERFALL.** Close to the road leading through the narrow Oddadalen valley, the twin cascades of Låtefoss waterfall plunge down the mountainside. The spray showers the road, while the river flows on under the old stone-vault bridge. In the 19th and early 20th centuries the waterfall received frequent visitors from Britain and Germany. They were taken by horse and cart from the fjord, up along Sandvinsvatnet lake and further up through the Oddadalen valley to Låtefoss. It was an arduous but rewarding journey.