

Skarvheimen Traverse

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£1095 or 1315 Euros
Intermediate

This delightful traverse of the Skarvheimen region passes through rolling hills, plateaux and open valleys dotted with frozen lakes and dark crags. It goes from Breistolen to Finse, both tiny isolated points on the map! It is overlooked by the mass of the Hardanger Icecap and the sense of space is enthralling.

- Ideal as a first hut-to-hut tour
- Relaxed days with plenty of options for different energy and aspiration levels
- **Combine with the ?Hardanger to Telemark Traverse? for a two week North to South journey**

Departures

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Introduction

Breistolen where our trip across Skarvheimen begins is just a mountain hotel on the road between Gol and Laerdal. Finse, at the highest point of the Oslo - Bergen railway, is not a big place either - a hotel, the DNT lodge, a few holiday homes, private houses and rather a lot of snow! The skiing is a joy as the weight of sacks is kept to a minimum by using the DNT lodges, where food, fuel and bedding await our arrival. Most days except the last, are about 15km, leaving time to ski up to local highpoints after arrival.

Type of skiing - Nordic Touring

Day tours, coaching sessions or multi-day tours using cambered, metal-edged skis and leather or soft plastic touring boots. Waxes are usually used and skins only for bigger climbs. Terrain is gentle to moderate, depending on the week. Skiing is usually on way-marked routes but sometimes through untracked snow. Only the easiest tours have machine-prepared trails.

Level

Skiers with previous Nordic skiing experience, able to travel over undulating terrain and to ski down moderate slopes at the most, in a variety of snow conditions. A confident snowplough and the ability to traverse are the minimum downhill technique requirements. Some tours are in more

remote areas, usually on un-tracked snow and with some long days. An appropriate degree of self sufficiency and stamina will be expected. On this trip we will need to be flexible in our planning with respect to weather and snow conditions.

Trip Itinerary

Day 1

From Oslo we take the bus to Breistolen for the first night.

Day 2

A short minibus ride takes us to Breistolen to start the skiing. The route starts gently uphill past frozen lakes and rolling hills to a high isolated lodge. There should be time to ski up some of the local high points from the lodge ? if wished!

Day 3

Easy going through valleys and across more frozen lakes - the reward after yesterday's uphill - to a delightful, old-fashioned lodge surrounded by crags and steep hills.

Day 4

We have 2 nights here which gives a day to ski up into the hills or even to a summit of over 1600m for a stunning panorama. Alternatively you could choose to have a relaxed day close to the lodge, a bit of skiing, a bit of sunbathing, pop in for a coffee & generally absorb the remote, quiet ambience of the valley.

Day 5

To a lodge perched in a wonderfully wild and exposed position on the arctic plateau. Again there is time for the more energetic to tick off a nearby highpoint.

Day 6

Another straightforward day to a hut with a ?Sami? welcome, reindeer and a view of the Hallingskarvet range, the last obstacle before the railway at Finse.

Day 7

The 22km route through the Hallingskarvet is intricate and dramatic. The intimidating barrier is breached more easily than one might think, by turning one way then the other, seeking out weaknesses past dark cliffs, over cols and between the great outcrops of the Kyrkjedori. A last uphill reveals the huge dome of the Hardanger Icecap beyond Finse. It?s all downhill to hot showers, cold beers and excellent cooking. You?ll arrive at Finse with a real sense of achievement, having completed a true journey by ski across an uninhabited, awe-inspiring arctic landscape.

Day 8 Departure

On the final morning, to complete the experience, you can ski from the DNT lodge and right onto the station platform, to catch the train to Oslo and home!

A fully detailed itinerary will be sent to you upon booking.

Further Information

This programme is intended as a guide and many other options exist. We have to consider weather, snow conditions and the abilities & ambitions of all group members. Flexibility is essential when considering the safety & enjoyment of a group in the mountains & all participants should be aware that ski-touring is more serious & committing than skiing based at a resort. The final decision remains with the group leader, for the safety and enjoyment of all.

Leadership

The course leader will hold a British Association of Snowsports Instructors Nordic qualification; (?Ski Instructor? at the least and may also be a BASI Telemark Instructor). She/he will hold the Winter Mountain Leader Award or have the ability and experience to navigate in winter conditions. While in no way interfering with the tour, coaching along the way in ski technique and waxing will help you ski more effectively and with less effort. We are always mindful of safety in cold conditions and wilderness areas. You will be in very good hands.

Accommodation

This will be in Den Norske Turistforening 'hytta' for 6 of the 7 nights. 'Hut' is a bit of a misnomer

and 'mountain lodge' is a better term. All lodges have shared 4-6 bedded rooms (twin rooms are available, at staffed lodges only, for a supplement). All meals (excellent in quantity and quality!) are provided and you make up your packed lunch from the breakfast buffet. There are hot showers (10 kroner), drying rooms, a shop and bar. We will also be using 'self-service' lodges for 2 nights; these are excellent timber-built buildings set in remote surroundings, with bunk rooms, fully-equipped kitchens, wood-burning stoves, a stockpile of wood (ready for chopping!), chemical toilets and food in store. On these nights we will share the tasks of wood-chopping, water collection, cooking, clearing up, etc. The first night on tour uses a non-DNT mountain hotel but with the same deal. If required, we can arrange reasonably priced accommodation in Oslo at the start or end of the tour.

What to bring

Kit lists can be found on the Trip Info page and downloaded from Members Information. But more details will follow upon booking. Generally, outdoor clothing, metal-edged Nordic touring skis, 75mm bindings, 75mm norm leather touring boots (with vibram soles) and touring poles are needed.

Owing to local inconsistencies of supply it is not convenient to hire this equipment in Norway. Ski equipment can be hired in [Oslo](#) or [Brynsdal](#) from [Brynsdal Mountain Sports](#)

Please contact us if you need advice or if you wish to hire skins (£25 for the tour), please indicate this on your booking form. Maps can be bought for the area, if you wish to buy one we will send you details with the full itinerary.

Full Package and Travel Arrangements

- The full package includes rail & bus travel in Norway; from Oslo city back to Oslo city, full-board accommodation as described above, instruction & leadership for the tour described.
- DNT annual membership is included. If you are already a 2012 DNT member, please send us a copy of your membership card when booking for a reduction of £60.
- Airport transfer to/from Oslo bus station & railway station **is not included.** Details will be included with your joining instructions.

Flights

- **Flights need to be arranged with your own travel agent**, 'cheap flights' companies or on the internet. Flights need to be to Oslo Gardermoen airport. Visit: www.travelsupermarket.com or www.ryanair.com (to Oslo Torp or Rygge) for options.
- NB: check with the airline for their 'skis on flight' charges and time required to check them in.
- Flights should be to Oslo Gardermoen. Arrival times should be approx 2hrs before bus departure time (on the 3rd) and return flight departure time should be approx 2 hrs after train arrival time in Oslo on your return date.

Bus departure on 3/03/12: from Oslo: 14.40

Train arrival on 10/03/12: in Oslo: 14.32

- Please let us know your flight details & check the bus & train times on the 3rd and 10th with us before booking your flights.

- Flights should not be booked until this trip is Guaranteed to Run. You can check the Trip Status against the Departure Dates above on our website, or email us for upto date information.
- It is also possible to fly to Oslo Torp & Rygge with Ryanair but please allow more time either way between Oslo city centre and Torp airport. Transfer details via the Ryanair website.
- We can organise nights in an Oslo hotel if your flights require it. eg 1 night B&B is £70 per person sharing a twin room; £110 single room. Please indicate that you would like this on your booking form.
- We will book all your bus and train tickets and seat reservations for travel from, and back to Oslo.

Exchange and Finance

There are exchange facilities in Oslo Airport but it would be best to obtain Norwegian Kroner prior to your departure from the UK, to save time and for convenience once we are on tour away from banks! Not a great deal of extra money is required but allow for the following: personal expenditure on drinks, postcards, trolls, etc. 3 nights are at staffed lodges with shop & bar ? also showers at 10kr. Oslo bus station left luggage 30kr/day. Airport transfers to Oslo centre - allow £12 each way (trains every 20 minutes/ takes 22 minutes). Evening meals with any additional hotel nights.

Insurance

A reminder that you need to arrange this independently at the time of booking; holiday insurance with special cover for touring is required. You need to be covered for ski touring and skiing on piste, in-track and on way marked trails. If you need more information, please contact us.

Minimum Numbers

This trip requires a minimum of five clients to book before it can be guaranteed to run. We usually take a maximum of 10 clients for a hut-to-hut tour. If this number is exceeded then two leaders will run the trip rather than just one.

These arrangements and services are provided by The Telemark Ski Company, our partners in Norway.

[Skarvheimen Traverse](#)

No



Space and
Silence