

WE4OUT

GUIDE 04

Lofoten & Vesterålen in 7 days

A week that ends where the road does — from the Bodø ferry at Moskenes to the whale quay at Andenes, one short driving day at a time.

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Read this first

Lofoten is 230 kilometres of road and about 460 kilometres of driving if you actually stop. That is the whole problem with a week here, and the whole opportunity.

Norwegian Scenic Route Lofoten is 230 km long and runs from Raftsundet to Å on the E10, with signed detours to Grunnfjør, Henningsvær, Eggum, Unstad, Utakleiv, Vikten and Nusfjord¹. You could drive that in a long day. Most visitors effectively do: ferry in, three nights somewhere, photograph Reine, photograph Hamnøy, leave. This guide is built the other way round. Seven days, short legs, and the evenings left free — because in Lofoten the weather decides what you see, and the only way to beat it is to be near the thing you want when the light arrives.

THE RULE

The three decisions that shape the week.

1. **Which door you come in by.** The Bodø–Moskenes ferry puts you at the far south-western tip with the whole archipelago ahead of you. Flying into Evenes and driving the E10 puts you at the north-eastern end. The route in this guide runs south-west to north-east, so it works with the ferry and against the airport — reverse every day if you arrive at Evenes.
2. **Whether you go on to Vesterålen.** Most people do not, and chapter 14 argues with them using traffic counts. Days 6 and 7 of this route are in Vesterålen, and they are the quietest two days of the week.
3. **When you go.** On the E10 at Ramberg in Flakstad, Statens vegvesen's permanent counter recorded a 2025 average of 4,849 vehicles a day in July against 1,928 in May and 2,389 in September². That is the same road, the same beaches and two and a half times the traffic.

What this guide is, and is not

It is a route, with the driving measured, the practical problem of each day named, and the places where you sleep described as **areas** rather than as hotel recommendations. We do not take commission and we do not rank accommodation. What we can do is tell you which valley to be in at the end of each day, and why that choice makes the next morning better.

It is not a list of the twenty best photographs in Lofoten. Those lists exist, they are free, and they are the reason the car park at Uttakleiv is the way it is. Where this guide sends you to a famous viewpoint it also tells you what the parking is actually like, and what it costs.

Every figure here — a distance, a ferry fare, a tunnel height, a trail time, an opening date — carries the source it came from and the date we read it. The last chapter lists them all. Where the official sources disagree with each other, and on this route they do, both are printed and we say which way to bet.

The one-paragraph version

Sail from Bodø to Moskenes. Sleep two nights at the southern tip, around Å, Sørvågen and Reine, and walk up Reinebringen early on the second morning. Move north to Flakstad on day three with Kvalvika and Ryten in the middle of it. Cross the Nappstraum tunnel to Vestvågøy on day four for the beaches — Haukland, Uttakleiv, Unstad — and the Viking hall at Borg. Day five is the long one, out to Henningsvær and on to Svolvær. Day six crosses to Vesterålen at Fiskebøl and lands at Sortland. Day seven drives Andøya to Andenes, where either the whale boats or the Senja ferry finish the trip.

The route at a glance

Seven days, seven nights, and no day longer than two hours behind the wheel.

Day	From → to	Driving	Night in	The day's real problem
1	Bodø → Moskenes → Å → Reine	12 km · 20 min	Å / Sørvågen	The ferry, and the queue for it
2	Around Reine	~20 km · 35 min	Reine / Hamnøy	Reinebringen's steps and its car park
3	Reine → Fredvang → Flakstad	63 km · 1 h 10	Ramberg / Flakstad	The Torsfjord road, and the Kvalvika walk
4	Flakstad → Vestvågøy	88 km · 1 h 45	Haukland / Leknes	Two single-track beach roads and a 3.9 m tunnel
5	Vestvågøy → Svolvær	85 km · 1 h 35	Svolvær / Kabelvåg	Henningsvær's bridges and its parking
6	Svolvær → Vesterålen	77 km · 1 h 25, plus the ferry	Sortland	The Fiskebøl–Melbu ferry, or 115 km round
7	Sortland → Andenes	110 km · 1 h 55	Andenes	A spaceport that closes the road

Total: about 460 km, of which about 8 km is the Fiskebøl–Melbu ferry and about 20 km is the day-2 estimate around Reine. Every other day was measured leg by leg on the road network with the OSRM routing engine on OpenStreetMap data; the times are the engine's free-flow estimate and take no account of summer traffic, road works, ferry queues or a camper's speed³. Treat every driving time in this guide as a floor, not a plan. In July, on the single-track detours, add half again.

Maps and GPX. This guide ships as a PDF without maps or GPX tracks. Statens vegvesen publishes free GPX files for its Scenic Routes, including Lofoten (Å to Raftsundet) and Andøya (Bjørnskin to Andenes), on its GPX download page⁴. Load those into your navigation app and use the day chapters here for the stops in between.

WATCH OUT

The times above are driving only. They do not include the Bodø ferry (about 3¼ hours), the Fiskebøl crossing (25 minutes plus queueing), any walk, or the twenty minutes you will lose at Hamnøy because everyone in front of you has stopped in the road to photograph the bridge.

If you have fewer days, or more

- **Five days.** Cut days 6 and 7 and fly out of Svolvær or Leknes. You will have seen Lofoten and none of Vesterålen, which is the normal trip.
- **Nine days.** Put the extra two days on Andøya and Øksnes — Nyksund, Stø and the Queen's Route — where day 7 currently rushes.
- **Ten days or more.** Add Senja. The ferry from Andenes to Gryllefjord exists precisely to make that itinerary work, and chapter 4 explains its season.