

WE4OUT

GUIDE 07

Norway north to south in 21 days

Tromsø to Kristiansand — about 3,100 km, fifteen ferries and ten toll projects, with the fares, the closures and the bills accounted for.

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Read this first

Twenty-one days, about 3,100 km, fifteen car ferries on the route as written (only a handful have a sensible land alternative, and the day chapters say which), one of which runs only in summer, and a road that starts north of the midnight-sun line and ends at the southern tip of the country. This is the longest thing we sell, and it is not hard driving. It is hard *planning*, and the five things that go wrong are all decided before you leave home.

THE RULE

One — the ferry you cannot book, on the day it only sails twice. The crossing from Senja to Andøya is the hinge of the first week. It runs a short season — the 2026 timetable is valid from 13.05.26 to 27.09.26¹ — and outside high summer there are only two sailings a day. Booking is for bus only, by telephone +47 992 83 226 or e-mail to fergebooking at torghatten-nord.no¹. A car joins the queue and hopes.

Two — the wrong ferry payment setup. On this route the prepayment agreement is not a marginal saving, it is hundreds of kroner. Private customers get a 50 % discount on journeys with ferries that are included in the AutoPASS for ferry scheme, business customers 40 %, and with a tag but no prepayment agreement you automatically get 10 %². Chapter 26 does the arithmetic. It cannot be fixed at the quay.

Three — a seasonal road that has not opened, or has already closed. Five stretches on this itinerary are shut in winter and their dates move by weeks. Fv. 520 over the mountain to Røldal opened 13 May 2026, with previous closures on 21 November and 20 December and previous openings on 1 May and 16 June³. Chapter 27 has the rest, and where to check.

Four — treating the north as one drive. Tromsø to Trondheim is half the trip's kilometres and ten of its fifteen ferries. Six crossings sit inside three days on the Helgeland coast, and four of the six are free — but only outside the summer rate period. Chapter 26 explains that trap, which is new and which almost nobody accounts for.

Five — the car. You will pick it up in Tromsø and leave it in Kristiansand, 3,100 km away. That is a one-way hire, it is the single largest cost after your own time, and no operator publishes the drop-off fee. Chapter 25 is about that, and it is the chapter we would read first.

What this guide is, and is not

Twenty-one day chapters you can drive as written, each with its distance, the hours at the wheel, every ferry and toll point that day actually needs and whether any of it can be booked, the **area** to sleep in, what is worth stopping for, what is overrated, and that day's real problem. Then thirteen chapters on what is the same every day: getting in and out of the route, one-way hire, the fifteen ferries, the seasonal roads, the three-week rhythm, campers and long vehicles, tolls, weather, light, money and the words on the signs.

It will not quote you a hotel, a campsite, a fuel price or a meal. Those move weekly, we cannot date them honestly, and a guide that prints them is wrong inside a month. Chapter 34 gives you the structure to price them yourself. Where two official sources disagree, both are printed and we say which way to bet. Where a source is silent, this guide says “not found — check before you go” rather than filling the gap.

WHERE THIS COMES FROM

On distances and times. The kilometres in the day headings are routed night stop to night stop on OpenStreetMap data with the OSRM router, checked on 7 October 2026 and rounded. “At the wheel” is the router’s pure driving time: it leaves out the ferry crossings, the queue at the quay and every stop, so a real day is longer, and narrow roads are usually slower than a router thinks. Your figures change with where exactly you sleep and which side roads you take. Where Statens vegvesen publishes a length for a stretch, that number is quoted and sourced. Every other figure in this guide carries a source and the date we read it.

On one operator’s pages. Torghattan Nord runs the Lofoten-to-Bodø crossing and several others here. In September 2026 its old website served a broken certificate chain; its timetable sheets can still be read, and the crossing time in Day 8 comes from one of them.

The free GPX you should not pay for

We do not sell a GPX file with this guide, and you should be suspicious of anyone who does for this route, because Statens vegvesen gives the good ones away. Every Norwegian Scenic Route page carries its own track: a GPX file download for GPS and navigation app, with GPX files available for all Scenic Routes, and in each file the direction of travel is fixed so that any alternative driving pattern must be adapted by the users themselves⁴. Nine of the eighteen Scenic Routes are on this itinerary. Download those nine and you have the scenic sections; the E6 and E39 links between them need no track.