

**ATLANTIC TRAVEL & TOURS**

**NORTHERN EUROPE**

**SENIOR TRAVEL**

**RELAX AND CULTURE: UNMISSABLE EXPERIENCES FOR  
SENIOR TRAVELERS IN NORWAY, SWEDEN, FINLAND AND THE  
NETHERLANDS**



**[WWW.VISITATLANTICTRAVELTOURS.COM](http://WWW.VISITATLANTICTRAVELTOURS.COM)**

## FROM THE CEO - FOUNDER

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Dear travelers,

Imagine rediscovering the pleasure of traveling at a gentle pace, without rush, allowing yourselves to be guided by curiosity and the landscapes that surround you.

Every place has a story to tell, every experience is an invitation to live in the moment, to **feel the rhythm of each destination and to savor its true essence.**

Picture leisurely walks through historic towns, along narrow streets that preserve ancient traditions, or moments of tranquility immersed in timeless natural landscapes. Let yourselves be embraced by the atmosphere of cultural cities, museums, local markets, rolling hills, and lakes that invite pause, reflection, and enjoyment.

This brochure is an invitation to dream with open senses: each page offers ideas, colors, scents, and inspirations to help you imagine a journey designed entirely for you. It is not just a collection of destinations, but a guide to experiences that combine **culture, nature, and comfort**, allowing you to fully enjoy every moment.

Turn these pages with curiosity, **let yourselves be inspired**, and begin planning a journey that celebrates the joy of discovering the world in your own way.



*Steve Tabacchi*

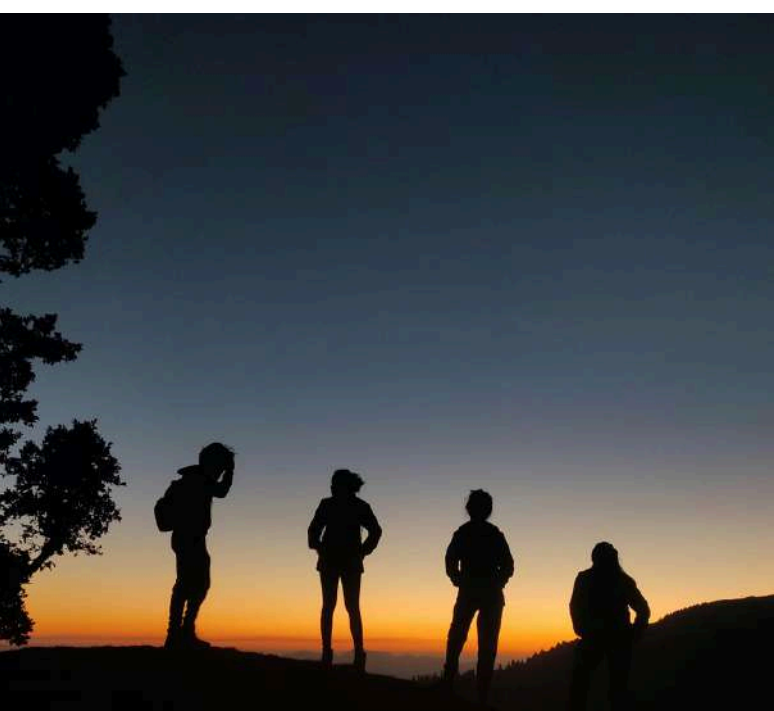
DR. STEVE TABACCHI  
CEO - FOUNDER  
ATLANTIC TRAVEL & TOURS

A night sky with a green aurora borealis over a rocky landscape. The aurora consists of two bright, vertical green bands that curve slightly towards the right. The sky is dark with many small white stars. The foreground shows a dark, rocky terrain with some greenish patches, possibly moss or lichen, illuminated by the green light of the aurora.

## **WHY TRAVEL WITH US**

**DISCOVER WHY OUR  
TOUR OPERATOR IS  
UNIQUE AND  
UNRIVALED!**

# BESPOKE TRAVEL FOR EVERYONE



## OUR TRAVEL ITINERARIES

We exclusively curate itineraries for innovative and original travel experiences that diverge from the conventional paths of mass tourism. Our aim is for each customer to be the protagonist of their own journey.

## OUR TRAVEL CLASSES

We arrange travel for the following categories:

- **FIRST**
- **PREMIUM**
- **ECONOMY**

# WE ORGANIZE ITINERARIES USING THE FOLLOWING TRANSPORTS



## CAR

- ✓ RENTAL



## VAN

- ✓ RENTAL
- ✓ SCHEDULED TOURS WITH DRIVER



## COACH

- ✓ RENTAL WITH DRIVER
- ✓ SCHEDULED TOURS WITH DRIVER



## MOTORHOME

- ✓ RENTAL



## MOTORCYCLE

- ✓ CHARTER SERVICES
- ✓ TAILOR MADE TRAVEL ITINERARIES

# PRIORITY CHECK-IN AND CHECKED BAGGAGE

Bid farewell to lengthy check-in queues! With our priority check-in service, you can swiftly obtain your boarding pass and check in your baggage. We are consistently prepared to provide this option, contingent upon airline availability, to enhance your travel experience, whether you are flying in premium or economy class. **Do not squander time; opt for comfort!**



# NO QUEUES AT THE AIRPORT WITH THE FAST TRACK SERVICE



We understand the frustration of enduring lengthy waits at airport security. Therefore, we consistently incorporate fast track access into our travel packages, allowing you to bypass the queue and enjoy a stress-free experience.

The service is contingent upon the availability at each airport, thus we cannot assure its constant accessibility. Nevertheless, we are pleased to announce that it has been implemented in the majority of the airports we utilize. **Seize this opportunity!**





## COMFORT IN AIRPORT LOUNGES

Once reserved solely for business and first-class passengers, airport lounges are now available to travelers in other classes as well. We provide the highest level of comfort and luxury to ensure your airport experience is memorable. In our travel packages, we consistently strive to include access to these exclusive areas at both departure and arrival points (subject to airport and airline availability). Relax, indulge in culinary delights, savor fine beverages, and enjoy refreshing showers, all within elegant and tranquil settings. **Seize this exceptional opportunity!**









# OTHERS SERVICES

OUR EXCEPTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH DIVERSE SUPPLIERS ENABLE US TO PROVIDE OUR CUSTOMERS WITH THE FINEST OF THE FOLLOWING SERVICES

**ADVANCED LUGGAGE SHIPPING**  
**TOURIST VISAS**  
**CURRENCY EXCHANGE**  
**INSURANCE POLICIES**



	AUD	7.01
	NZD	5.05
	JPY	0.0913
	GBP	11.23
	EUR	9.71
	SGD	5.35
	CHF	7.01



# ALWAYS TRAVEL WITH A PREMIUM DISCOUNT!



**-20%**

- **ACTIVE YEAR-ROUND**
- **FOR ALL CATEGORIES OF TRAVELERS**
- **NO MINIMUM SPENDING THRESHOLD REQUIRED**



# TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHER

FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE TOUR  
**FOREVER**



Certain journeys hold a unique significance: a honeymoon, a wedding anniversary marked by the renewal of vows, or cherished moments spent with close friends or family. Such beautiful occasions will be immortalized through professional photography and videography. Should you wish to incorporate this option into your upcoming trip, we are pleased to provide assistance with photographers who can transform your experience into a lasting memory.



## **ONE FREE INDIVIDUAL FOR EVERY 15 PAYING CUSTOMERS**

Take advantage of our **perpetually active** promotion. If you can gather a **minimum of 15 individuals**, one person will receive a **complimentary** trip. Consider anyone who might be interested among family, friends, colleagues, or others. Additionally, if you require a tour leader or tour guide to assist you and your group throughout the entire tour, we can provide this service as well



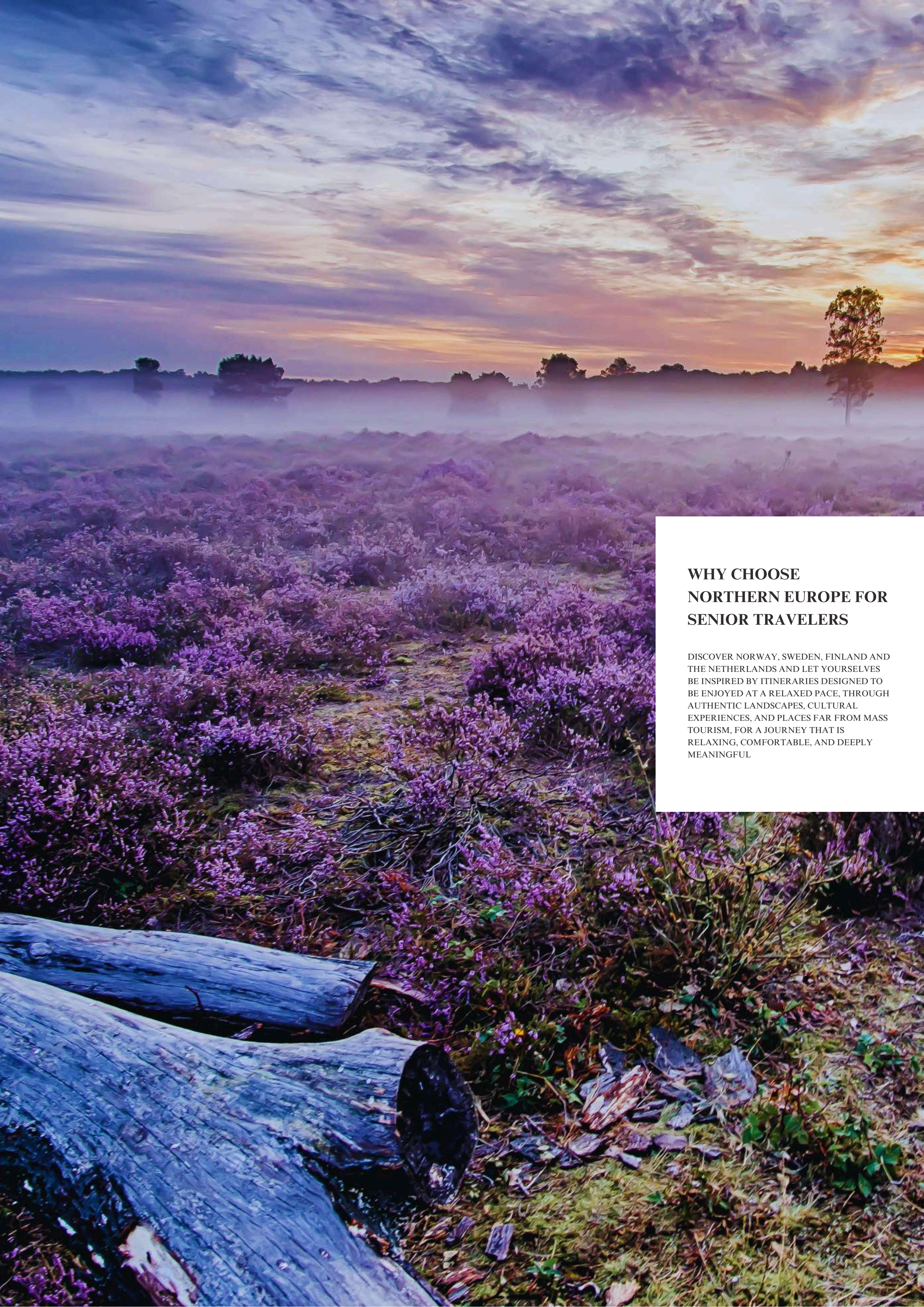
## **OUR COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CANCER RESEARCH**



THROUGH OUR TRIPS, WE AIM TO PROVIDE OUR CUSTOMERS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO **SUPPORT** NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO ADDRESSING THE FOLLOWING GLOBAL CHALLENGES.



- **CONSERVATION OF PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE**
- **GLOBAL WARMING**
- **CANCER RESEARCH**



## **WHY CHOOSE NORTHERN EUROPE FOR SENIOR TRAVELERS**

DISCOVER NORWAY, SWEDEN, FINLAND AND THE NETHERLANDS AND LET YOURSELVES BE INSPIRED BY ITINERARIES DESIGNED TO BE ENJOYED AT A RELAXED PACE, THROUGH AUTHENTIC LANDSCAPES, CULTURAL EXPERIENCES, AND PLACES FAR FROM MASS TOURISM, FOR A JOURNEY THAT IS RELAXING, COMFORTABLE, AND DEEPLY MEANINGFUL

# NORTHERN EUROPE FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO TRAVEL CALMLY AND CONSCIOUSLY



There are moments in life when travel takes on a different meaning: no longer the pursuit of quantity, but the value of time, comfort, and the quality of emotions. Travel becomes a slower pace, built on listening to one's own rhythm and the opportunity to experience each place without rushing.

For those over 65, a well-planned itinerary is not only a practical choice, but a way to experience the world with greater peace of mind, avoiding fatigue and favoring authentic, accessible, and well-organized experiences.

Northern Europe—including Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands—is particularly suited to this type of travel thanks to efficient infrastructure, reliable services, and a welcoming culture focused on traveler comfort and safety. In Norway, fjord landscapes can be experienced through slow, scenic navigation, without the need for demanding routes, allowing you to admire deep valleys and spectacular coastlines directly from the water or from easily accessible observation points. In Sweden, cities like Stockholm offer an ideal balance of culture, nature, and easy mobility, with compact and well-organized historic centers. In Finland, the journey is more intimate: lakes, forests, and human-scale cities foster a peaceful experience, often enhanced by accommodations immersed in nature yet equipped with every comfort. In the Netherlands, the flat landscape and urban organization allow for easy travel, with cities like Amsterdam and Utrecht easily explored thanks to efficient transportation and flat routes.

One of the most appreciated aspects of this area is its ease of movement. Punctual trains, regular connections, and a strong focus on accessibility make travel stress-free and easily manageable, even on more complex itineraries. Distances, while present, are made easier by efficient planning and well-structured tourist services.

The pace of travel is naturally more relaxed. Activities can be organized flexibly, alternating cultural visits with leisurely breaks, without pressure or overly crowded itineraries. Easily accessible museums, panoramic cruises, small historic towns, and natural landscapes that can be observed without physical effort become central elements of the experience.

The cultural component is also easily accessible. Northern Europe offers an accessible and well-presented historical and contemporary heritage, with modern museums, clear guided tours, and a constant focus on the quality of the visitor experience.

A trip to this region for those over 65 is therefore not a shortened journey, but an optimized one: designed to enhance comfort, reduce complexity, and leave room for natural discovery. It's a way of traveling that prioritizes tranquility, safety, and the ability to fully experience every moment, without sacrificing the richness of the destinations.

# WHY CHOOSE NORTHERN EUROPE FOR A TRIP FOR OVER-65S

## A WAY OF TRAVELLING THAT PRIORITISES COMFORT, CLARITY AND SERENITY

Traveling after 65 means choosing a more conscious pace, where the value of the experience lies not in the quantity of things seen, but in the quality of the time spent. Northern Europe perfectly meets this need thanks to a rare balance between organization, safety, and easily accessible environments. Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands offer orderly, reliable environments designed to make every trip simple and every experience accessible.

## SELECTED EXPERIENCES, LIGHT RHYTHMS AND LESS PREDICTABLE PLACES

The value of a trip to this area lies not in the density of attractions, but in the opportunity to experience authentic contexts at your own pace and without pressure.

In Norway, beyond the most famous fjords, it is possible to explore small coastal villages and less frequented scenic routes where the landscape can be experienced directly and silently.

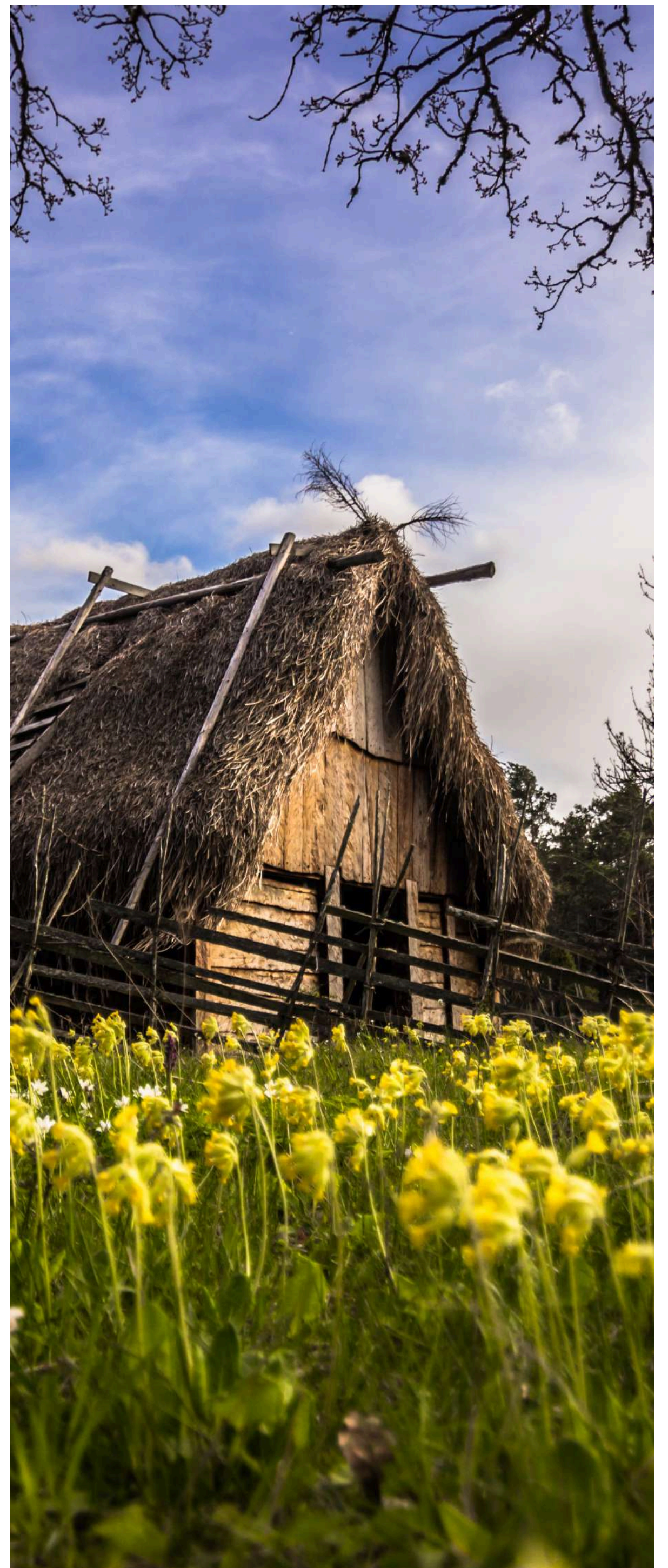
In Sweden, outside the major cities, the Stockholm archipelago and the lake regions offer islands, local communities and natural environments where the rhythm is still tied to the daily life of the territory.

In Finland, the experience shifts to more secluded areas such as the central lake region or less traveled forest areas, where nature and small settlements coexist in discreet and authentic balance.

In the Netherlands, beyond the main cities, the Dutch countryside, the villages along the canals, and the less touristy coastal areas allow for a slower and more personal discovery of the territory.

## A JOURNEY BUILT TO REDUCE COMPLEXITY AND ENHANCE TIME

Northern Europe stands out for its ability to simplify the day-to-day management of travel: well-organized journeys, clear services, and efficient infrastructure allow for a stress-free experience of each stop. This approach allows for a natural pace, alternating sightseeing, relaxation, and short nature experiences without fatigue. It's a travel model that emphasizes serenity, accessible destinations, and the freedom to choose how to spend each day.





# UNFORGETTABLE TAILOR-MADE TRIPS FOR OVER-65S

A trip to Northern Europe for those over 65 is more than just a vacation: it's an opportunity to explore extraordinary landscapes, discover authentic villages, immerse yourself in the local culture, and experience moments of relaxation far from the frenzy of mass tourism.

For this reason, it should never be a standard package, but a carefully and attentively designed experience, conceived for your pace, your passions, and your history.

Our approach to creating trips for seniors 65 and over is based on a fundamental principle: each itinerary must be unique and reflect the needs of those who travel slowly, seeking comfort, accessibility, and authenticity.

We listen to your desires, understand your pace and travel style, and create an itinerary that makes every stage of this experience special.

Every detail is carefully studied:

- Choice of destinations, from historic villages to little-known hamlets, quiet beaches and natural parks with accessible trails
- Pace of the itinerary, to enjoy every experience without rushing and without stress
- Experiences along the way, such as scenic walks, visits to local museums and galleries, food and wine tastings, and short excursions immersed in nature
- Selection of the most comfortable, welcoming and charming facilities, away from the most crowded tourist routes

The result is an authentic, balanced, and deeply personal journey, designed to offer moments of relaxation, discovery, and pleasure, transforming each stop into a lasting and precious memory.

# EXPERIENCES THAT MAKE TRIP TO NORTHERN EUROPE EASIER AND MORE PEACEFUL FOR OVER-65S



## **A JOURNEY BUILT ON BALANCE, CLARITY AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT**

In Northern Europe, mature travel takes place in an environment characterized by order, safety, and a keen focus on the quality of daily life. Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands offer environments where travel is intuitive and experiences are easily manageable, without operational complexity. The alternation between accessible nature, well-organized cities, and small, orderly towns allows for a seamless and effortless journey.

## **LIGHT EXPERIENCES AMONG CULTURE, LANDSCAPES AND MORE INTIMATE CONTEXTS**

The activities best suited to this type of travel are natural and non-intensive, prioritizing quality time over quantity. In Norway, beyond the most famous fjords, you can experience less-traveled scenic routes and small coastal villages where the connection with the landscape remains direct and authentic. In Sweden, the most interesting experiences are often found in the archipelago and lake regions, where islands, nature, and local communities offer a more intimate and peaceful dimension. In Finland, travel focuses primarily on less urban areas such as lake regions and forests, where the natural setting becomes the central element of daily experience. In the Netherlands, beyond the main cities, the Dutch countryside and small villages along the canals allow for a slower and more personal exploration of the region, away from the more obvious traffic.

## **A TRAVEL ORGANIZATION THAT REDUCES COMPLEXITY AND INCREASES PEACE OF MIND**

One of the most distinctive features of Northern Europe is the overall ease of travel management. Connections are efficient, services are clear, and distances between major destinations are generally short or well-structured. This allows for flexible itineraries, with balanced visits and regular breaks. The result is an experience that prioritizes tranquility, safety, and the ability to live each day at a natural pace, free from pressure or overload.

# WHEN TO GO ON A TRIP TO NORTHERN EUROPE FOR THOSE OVER 65



**Spring** in Northern Europe marks a progressive transformation of the landscape, with rapidly lengthening days and landscapes returning to their former glory after the colder months. Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands demonstrate an interesting balance between resurgent nature and the tranquility of tourist flows. Lakes still partially frozen, revitalizing forests, and more livable cities make this the ideal time for a slow, gradual journey.

**Summer** is the most fluid time for traveling in Northern Europe, with more stable weather and a wide range of routes and connections. In Norway, the fjords are fully explored, in Sweden and Finland, lakes and archipelagos dominate the landscape, while in the Netherlands, cities and countryside are seamlessly and easily connected. The very long days allow for flexible planning and a more relaxed travel pace.

**Autumn** ushers in a noticeable transformation in the landscape, with warmer hues and a softer light that changes the perception of places. In Norway and Sweden, forests are tinged with intense colors, in Finland nature takes on a quieter and more profound character, while in the Netherlands, the rural and urban landscapes settle into a more orderly and tranquil dimension. It is a season that favors a more essential and less crowded experience.

**Winter** in Northern Europe is characterized by short days, cold temperatures, and low light that profoundly alters the atmosphere. In Norway, Sweden, and Finland, the landscape becomes simpler and more intimate, with snow, forests, and small towns. In the Netherlands, however, the season maintains a more urban and functional dimension, with cities always accessible and organized. It is the most essential time of year, when travel takes on a slow and contemplative pace.

# 10 TRAVEL EXPERIENCES FOR OVER-65S THAT ONLY EXIST IN NORTHERN EUROPE

In Northern Europe—between Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands—there are experiences that don't depend on the major tourist itineraries, but on territories that are still surprisingly accessible in their most authentic form. These are places and situations that arise from the encounter between water, forests, archipelagos, and spaces planned with a different logic than traditional tourism: slower, more widespread, quieter.

Among the most suggestive:

- Traverse Sweden's hidden archipelagos, past inhabited islands and remote lighthouses. Off the beaten track, the Stockholm archipelago stretches across hundreds of smaller islands, connected by small local ferries. Here, you can reach communities like Sandhamn or Möja, where life still follows the rhythm of the sea, amid wooden harbors, red houses, and rarely traveled coastal paths.
- Sleeping in a roadless lakeside cabin in Central Finland - In the Finnish lake district, far from Helsinki and the beaten track, there are isolated cottages accessible only by dirt roads or small local connections. In areas like Saimaa, daily life is marked by a private sauna, absolute silence, and water as far as the eye can see, often with no other dwellings visible.
- Drive along forgotten Norwegian scenic roads through villages and secondary fjords - In addition to the most famous fjords, Western Norway offers routes such as the Sognefjellet Scenic Route or lesser-traveled stretches of the Nordfjord, where the road passes through deserted plateaus, glacial lakes and small farming villages suspended between the mountains and the sea, with very little traffic even in high season.
- Traveling the coastal region of Helgeland between islands and fishing villages - In northern Norway, the Helgeland region is less frequented than the tourist circuits of Lofoten. Here, the coastline is fragmented by islands, fishing villages, and local sea connections, with landscapes dominated by mountains rising directly from the water.
- Navigating the backwater canal systems of rural Holland - In the Netherlands, beyond Amsterdam, regions such as Giethoorn and the Overijssel countryside allow you to travel by electric boat along narrow canals between thatched houses and pedestrian bridges, away from the main tourist flows.
- Driving through the inland forests of Värmland, Sweden - In Sweden, the Värmland region is characterized by continuous forests and interconnected lakes, where villages are far apart and secondary roads run through miles of undeveloped nature.
- Explore Dalarna among traditional villages and rural culture - Also in Sweden, Dalarna preserves a rural landscape of red wooden houses, lakes, and forests. It's one of the most authentic areas to observe traditional Swedish culture off the beaten track.
- Crossing the artificial islands of Flevoland in the Netherlands - In the Netherlands, the Flevoland region represents a territory entirely reclaimed from the sea. Here, you travel among dikes, geometric fields, and planned cities built on land reclaimed from the sea.
- Travel the less touristy Lofoten region in inland Norway - In Norway, some inland areas of the Lofoten archipelago, far from the main centers like Reine, offer smaller villages, secondary roads and landscapes still linked to fishing and sea conditions.
- Following the rural coasts of Western Finland - In Finland, the coastal strip of the Gulf of Bothnia alternates small villages, seasonally inhabited islands and stretches of undeveloped nature, where the connection between land and sea is continuous but little frequented by international tourism.

Taken together, these experiences tell of a secondary and authentic Northern Europe, made up of local connections, peripheral territories, and landscapes experienced in their everyday dimension, far from the most beaten tourist routes.





## THE MOST CHARMING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR A TRIP FOR OVER 65S

A trip to Northern Europe isn't defined solely by the destinations, but also by the places you stay, where the connection with the landscape becomes a continuous and integral part of your daily experience. Between Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands, accommodations aren't just bases, but different ways to experience the light, water, forests, and cities.

In Norway, many accommodations are located directly along the fjords or in small coastal villages like those in the Geirangerfjord and Sognefjord areas. The wooden lodges and panoramic cabins are designed to be completely open to the outdoors, with large windows that allow the landscape to be ever-present, including deep water, mountains, and silence.

In Sweden, off-the-beaten-path accommodations are often found in the archipelagos or in inland regions like Dalarna. Here, you'll find lakeside cottages, traditional red houses, or small boutique hotels nestled in the woods, where water and forest are always just steps away and set the tone for your stay.

In Finland, especially in lake regions like Saimaa, accommodations are often secluded and integrated into the landscape. Wooden cottages, minimalist villas, and private saunas overlooking the water allow for a direct connection with nature, where the boundary between inside and outside is almost imperceptible.

In the Netherlands, your stay spans waterfront cities and landscaped countryside. Beyond Amsterdam, you'll find boutique hotels along the canals, renovated historic homes, and contemporary structures in rural villages, where bridges, dams, and waterways are part of everyday life.

In Northern Europe, accommodation is never separated from the landscape: it becomes an extension of the landscape itself. Whether it's a cabin on a fjord, a house on a lake, a forest retreat, or a canalside home, every choice influences the way you experience your trip, making your stay an active part of it.

# MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN PLANNING A TRIP FOR OVER-65S IN NORTHERN EUROPE



## **OVERLOADING THE ITINERARY WITH TOO MANY DESTINATIONS**

One of the most common mistakes is trying to combine Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands into a single trip in just a few days. Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands offer very different landscapes: fjords, forests, lakes, and cities on the water require real exploration time. An itinerary that's too fragmented easily turns into a series of transfers, reducing the time to truly experience the places.

## **UNDERESTIMATING DISTANCES, SEASONS AND INTERNAL CONNECTIONS**

In Northern Europe, transportation is an integral part of the journey. In Norway, many fjord areas require ferries or long, scenic drives; in Finland, distances between towns pass through forests and lakes; in Sweden, some connections are made between archipelagos with local ferries; in the Netherlands, despite being more compact, water and infrastructure can influence travel times. Careless planning risks fragmenting the experience.

## **SETTING A SCHEDULE THAT IS TOO RIGID**

Climate and light in Northern Europe change rapidly throughout the day and with the seasons. In Norway and Sweden, light can completely transform the perception of fjords and forests; in Finland, the condition of lakes and forests varies between morning and evening; in the Netherlands, the weather influences the livability of canals and open spaces. An itinerary that is too rigid reduces the ability to adapt to these natural variations.

## **LIMIT YOURSELF EXCLUSIVELY TO CAPITAL CITIES**

Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, and Amsterdam are essential starting points, but they don't represent the entire experience. The most authentic Northern Europe is often found outside the capitals: in the secondary fjords, lakeside villages, archipelagos, and countryside crisscrossed by water and forests.

## **CONSIDER ACCOMMODATIONS AS SIMPLE LOGISTICAL SUPPORTS**

In Northern Europe, sleeping is part of the experience. A lodge on the fjords of Norway, a cabin on a lake in Finland, a house on the archipelago of Sweden, or a boutique hotel along the canals of the Netherlands profoundly influence the way you experience the region. Choosing accommodations that aren't integrated into the landscape means missing out on an essential component of the trip.

## **DON'T BUILD THE TRIP ON YOUR OWN IDEA OF EXPERIENCE**

Northern Europe is not a uniform destination: it can be contemplative in the Norwegian fjords, silent in the Finnish forests, sprawling in the Swedish archipelagos, or orderly and aquatic in the Netherlands. Applying a standard framework risks flattening these differences. A well-planned trip should instead adapt to the rhythm and nature of each individual country, enhancing what makes it unique.



## QUALITY AND SERVICE UPDATES

The experiences and services presented in this brochure have been selected based on qualitative criteria focused on comfort, accessibility, and the personalization of the travel experience.

As operational conditions, dedicated services, and policies may be subject to updates or changes over time, each proposal will be reviewed and confirmed at the quotation stage, in order to ensure full alignment with the traveler's specific requirements and the expected quality standards.



# **NORWAY – A GEOGRAPHICAL SYSTEM BUILT BETWEEN OCEAN AND LAND, WHERE THE HISTORY OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC IS INTERTWINED WITH FJORDS, ARCHIPELAGOS AND ANCIENT SETTLEMENTS**



Located in the western part of the Scandinavian Peninsula, Norway is one of the European territories where physical geography and human history are closely intertwined. First, the country's structure is defined by an extremely rugged Atlantic coastline that extends from the Oslofjord to the northern Arctic regions, including deep fjords, archipelagos, and island systems that have historically determined settlement patterns. To understand Norway's identity, it is necessary to begin with the first traces of human settlement dating back to the post-glacial period, when retreating ice allowed the formation of coastal communities along areas such as the Trondheimsfjord and Rogaland. Subsequently, between the 8th and 11th centuries, the Viking Age developed, a period during which centers such as Trondheim (Nidaros) and the areas of Vestlandet became key hubs for exploration, trade, and raids along the North Atlantic routes. During this period, the first connections with the North Atlantic islands, including the present-day Faroe Islands and Iceland, also emerged, consolidating the country's maritime vocation. Over time, between the 14th and 19th centuries, Norway entered into various forms of political union: first with Denmark (Danish-Norwegian Union), during which centers like Bergen assumed a key role in the Hanseatic League's trade, and subsequently with Sweden through the Swedish-Norwegian Union (1814–1905). During this period, coastal cities like Bergen and Trondheim continued to grow as maritime hubs, while the interior of the country remained less populated due to the difficult orographic conditions associated with mountains and plateaus.

With independence in 1905, Norway structured itself as a modern state divided into strongly identified geographical regions:

- ØSTLANDET – SOUTHEASTERN AREA INCLUDING OSLO AND THE OSLOFJORD, MAIN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CENTER
- SØRLANDET – SOUTHERN COASTAL STRIP WITH KRISTIANSAND AND THE COASTAL ARCHIPELAGOS OF SKAGERRAK
- VESTLANDET – REGION OF THE GREAT FJORDS, WITH THE SOGNEFJORD, THE HARDANGERFJORD AND THE GEIRANGERFJORD
- TRØNDELAG – CENTRAL AREA WITH TRONDHEIM AND THE TRONDHEIMSFJORD
- NORD-NORGE – THE NORTHERN ARCTIC REGION WITH TROMSØ, ALTA, NORDKAPP AND THE ARCHIPELAGOS OF LOFOTEN, VESTERÅLEN AND SVALBARD

Regarding the main entry points into the country, the Norwegian airport network is structured to directly connect the different regions:

- Oslo Gardermoen Airport – Main international hub and gateway to the Oslofjord area
- Kristiansand Airport Kjevik - Access to the south coast and Skagerrak resorts
- Bergen Airport Flesland – Gateway to the Westfjords
- Trondheim Airport Værnes – Access to Central Norway and the Trondheimsfjord
- Tromsø Airport – Gateway to Arctic Norway and northern areas
- Longyearbyen Airport – Main gateway to the Svalbard archipelago

In short, Norway is a continuous territorial system in which fjords like Sognefjord, archipelagos like Lofoten and Svalbard, and cities like Oslo, Bergen, and Tromsø are not isolated elements, but rather parts of a single geographical and historical structure. It is precisely this continuity between sea, land, and history that defines the country's identity and its strong recognizability within Northern Europe.

# SLOW ITINERARIES THROUGH ACCESSIBLE NATURE, SMALL TOWNS AND STRUCTURED LANDSCAPES

## PLACES AND EXPERIENCES FOR AN OVER-65 TRIP OFF THE BEATEN PATH

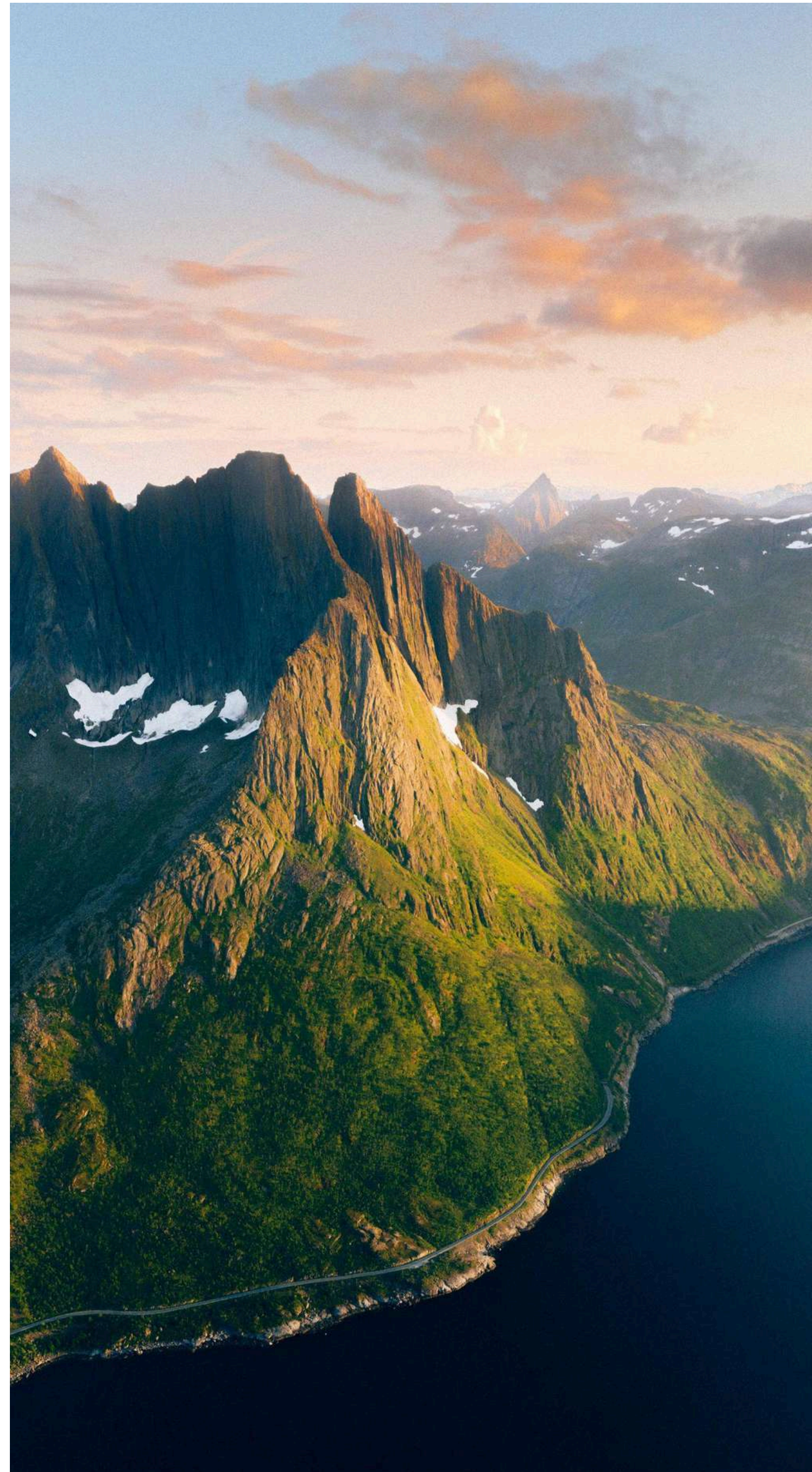
A trip to Norway after age 65 is structured as an experience of observation and exploration, where rhythm becomes a central part of the journey. The distinguishing feature is not the number of places visited, but the opportunity to experience authentic contexts with gradual journeys, efficient infrastructure, and direct access to natural landscapes and small towns.

From a landscape perspective, some areas are particularly suited to slow, uncrowded tourism. The Hardangerfjord coastal stretch allows for seamless travel between villages like Ulvik and Eidfjord, with scenic routes like the Hardanger Scenic Route connecting waterfalls, orchards, and small towns without the need for complex routes. In the Geirangerfjord area, accessible by ferry and road, there are structured observation points like Ørnesvingen and Flydalsjuvet, allowing for enjoyment of the landscape without significant physical effort.

The urban and historical dimension emerges in small but well-organized centers. The city of Bergen strikes a balance between accessibility and local identity, with the historic Bryggen district and a port system that directly connects the Westfjords. Further north, Ålesund offers a compact urban structure on islands connected by bridges, with Art Nouveau architecture and direct ocean views, ideal for a visit without complex elevation changes.

Culturally and naturally, Northern Norway offers experiences that are well-distributed and accessible even at a later age. The Senja area, with its National Scenic Route and landmarks like Tungeneset, allows visitors to enjoy the Arctic landscape without long excursions. The Vesterålen islands, with towns like Sortland, also offer a stable environment, with distributed services and regular connections by land and sea. Inland, the Gudbrandsdalen valley allows for seamless travel through rural landscapes, historic villages, and cultural trails steeped in Norwegian tradition.

In this context, a trip to Norway after age 65 is not based on complex or physically demanding itineraries, but on a network of accessible fjords, compact cities, and structured panoramic landscapes, which allow for a continuous and peaceful enjoyment of the territory without sacrificing the depth of the experience.





## DID YOU KNOW?

In Norway, the landscape is not only scenic, but is the direct result of glacial erosion, which during the last ice ages carved out deep fjords, shaping one of the most rugged coastlines in the world. In some areas of Vestlandet, such as the Sognefjord and Hardangerfjord, sea depths often exceed 1,000 meters, while mountains emerge directly from the water. A little-known aspect concerns the presence of post-glacial uplift phenomena along the northern Norwegian coast: in some areas of Lofoten and Vesterålen, the coastline continues to slowly change, creating new rocky surfaces and micro-islands over time.

The capital Oslo is one of the few cases in Europe where a fjord extends directly into the city center: the Oslofjord penetrates deeply into the metropolitan area, creating a direct relationship between the urban environment and the marine system.

In the north of the country, the city of Tromsø lies above the Arctic Circle and is one of the main observation points for the Northern Lights, while prehistoric rock carvings, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, have been discovered near Alta, testifying to human presence in the Arctic region dating back thousands of years.

One of the least intuitive aspects for those visiting is the relationship between population and space: with a very large surface area and one of the lowest population densities in Europe, large areas of the territory remain almost completely uninhabited, especially in the mountainous regions of Innlandet and in the more inland areas of Troms og Finnmark, where villages can be located tens of kilometers from each other.

A surprising aspect concerns mobility: many internal connections are not via continuous roads, but through an extremely complex network of tunnels, bridges, and maritime connections. In the Lofoten area in particular, some villages are connected by suspension bridges and underwater tunnels that replace traditional land infrastructure, making the landscape an integral part of the transportation system.

Another little-known fact concerns the presence of sandy beaches of tropical origin in the Arctic environment: places like Haukland Beach in Lofoten have pale sand and turquoise waters, even though they are located well above the Arctic Circle, thanks to the particular combination of ocean currents and subarctic climate.

A lesser-known historical element concerns the city of Bergen, which was one of the main centers of the Hanseatic League in Northern Europe: the historic Bryggen district still preserves colorful wooden buildings dating back to the medieval period, built along the commercial port.

In the cultural sphere, the city of Trondheim is home to Nidaros Cathedral, built over the supposed burial place of St. Olav and considered one of the most important Gothic buildings in Northern Europe, which made the city a historic center of medieval pilgrimage and religious and political power.

A surprising fact concerns energy production: Norway generates almost all of its electricity from hydroelectric sources thanks to the presence of thousands of waterfalls and mountain rivers, such as those in the Nordland region, transforming the Alpine conformation of the territory into a widespread natural energy resource.

Finally, a very characteristic phenomenon is the management of light in northern cities: in places like Longyearbyen in the Svalbard Islands, people live for months without direct sunlight during the winter and with continuous light in the summer, creating a perception of time completely different from that of the temperate regions of Europe.



# SWEDEN – A CONTINUOUS TERRITORY BETWEEN THE BALTIC, ARCHIPELAGOS, GREAT LAKES AND ARCTIC REGIONS, WHERE PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY AND HUMAN HISTORY DEVELOP AS A SINGLE INTEGRATED SYSTEM



Located in the eastern part of the Scandinavian Peninsula, Sweden is one of the European territories where the continuity between seas like the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Bothnia, islands like the Stockholm Archipelago and the Gothenburg Archipelago, inland lakes like Vänern and Mälaren, and vast forested areas like the regions of Värmland and Dalarna directly defines the country's geographical structure and historical development. Island systems distributed along the entire eastern and western coasts, such as the islands of Öland and Gotland, profoundly influence settlement patterns and connectivity between regions. To understand Sweden's identity, it is necessary to start from the first phases of human occupation after the Ice Age, when retreating ice made the Baltic coastal areas and inland basins like Lake Mälaren habitable. In this context, the first stable communities of Mesolithic hunter-gatherer populations developed in the northern Baltic, belonging to the prehistoric cultural groups of post-glacial Scandinavia (not identifiable with modern ethnonyms), with settlements along the emerging coasts and lake areas that exploited fishing, hunting, and inland waterways. Subsequently, between the Iron Age and the Viking period (8th–11th centuries), the regions of present-day central Sweden became part of the Baltic trade networks and the waterways to Eastern Europe, with centers such as Birka, located right on Lake Mälaren, among the first urban and commercial hubs in Scandinavia. Continuing in time, between the Middle Ages and the modern era, the Kingdom of Sweden consolidated and the role of Stockholm, strategically located between Lake Mälaren and the Baltic Sea, strengthened. The city gradually became the country's main political, administrative, and maritime center, while port cities on the west coast, such as Gothenburg, assumed a key role in connections with the North Sea and European trade routes. Between the 17th and 18th centuries, Sweden also experienced the period of the Swedish Empire, during which control of the Baltic Sea further strengthened the importance of coastal cities and maritime systems. With the loss of Finland in 1809 and the subsequent constitutional evolution, Sweden transformed into a modern and stable state, with a strong integration of urban development, internal natural resources, and coastal infrastructure.

In this framework, the contemporary state is divided into well-defined geographical macro-areas:

- GÖTALAND – SOUTHERN AREA INCLUDING SCANIA, SMÅLAND AND THE WEST COAST UP TO GOTHENBURG, INTEGRATING COASTAL SYSTEMS ON THE KATTEGAT AND SKAGERRAK AND ARCHIPELAGOS SUCH AS BOHUSLÄN AND THE ISLANDS OF THE SOUTHWEST COAST
- SVEALAND – CENTRAL REGION THAT INCLUDES STOCKHOLM, THE MÄLAREN SYSTEM AND THE ENTIRE STOCKHOLM ARCHIPELAGO, ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST COMPLEX IN THE BALTIC SEA, WHERE CITIES, ISLANDS AND COAST FORM A UNIQUE SYSTEM
- NORRLAND – A VAST NORTHERN REGION CHARACTERISED BY BOREAL FORESTS, RIVERS AND A FRAGMENTED COASTLINE ON THE GULF OF BOTHNIA, WITH CITIES SUCH AS LULEÅ AND SPARSELY DEVELOPED NATURAL SYSTEMS
- SWEDISH LAPLAND (ARCTIC AREA) – NORTHERN PART OF NORRLAND INCLUDING KIRUNA AND ABISKO, WITH SUBARCTIC LANDSCAPES, ANCIENT RELIEFS AND EXTREME CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

With regard to the main entry points into the country, the Swedish airport network is structured according to its north-south extension and the distribution of macro-areas:

- Stockholm Arlanda Airport - Main international hub and gateway to central Sweden and the Stockholm archipelago
- Gothenburg Landvetter Airport - Gateway to Western Sweden and the Götaland region
- Malmö Airport - Access to southern Sweden and the Øresund system
- Kiruna Airport - Gateway to Swedish Lapland and the Arctic regions

In short, Sweden is a continuous territorial system in which the Baltic coast, archipelagos like Stockholm, large inland lakes like Lake Mälaren, boreal forests, and Arctic regions are not separate elements, but rather interconnected parts of a single geographical and historical structure. It is precisely this continuity between sea, islands, interior, and Arctic that defines the country's identity within Northern Europe.

# SLOW ITINERARIES AMONG SILENT ARCHIPELAGOS, INLAND LAKES AND COMPACT CENTERS

## PLACES AND EXPERIENCES FOR AN OVER-65 TRIP OFF THE BEATEN PATH

A trip to Sweden after age 65 is a progressive and relaxed experience, where the quality of travel and the continuity of the landscapes matter more than the number of stops. The Swedish landscape, thanks to its linear structure of coasts, forests, and lakes, allows for natural and well-distributed routes, with small towns and efficient connections even over long distances.

Scenically, some of the most suitable areas are along the western coasts and in the central lake systems. In the Gothenburg archipelago, islands like Styrso and Brännö offer short ferry rides and flat routes between coastal villages and viewpoints over the Kattegat. Inland, Lake Mälaren allows for gradual exploration between historic towns like Strängnäs and Mariefred, with simple and continuous rail and road connections.

The size of urban centers plays a key role in travel accessibility. The city of Uppsala strikes a balance between accessibility and cultural interest, with a compact center, flat streets, and concentrated attractions such as Uppsala Cathedral and the historic district along the Fyrisån River. Further south, Kalmar offers an orderly urban structure, dominated by Kalmar Castle and directly connected to the island of Öland via an easily navigable bridge, with open and accessible coastal landscapes.

In terms of culture and nature, northern Sweden offers extensive but well-organized experiences. The Swedish Lapland area offers quieter settings around Jokkmokk, where the Ájtte Museum offers a direct insight into local culture without complex itineraries. Further southeast, the High Coast region, with accessible spots like Skuleberget (also accessible by cable car), offers structured and easily accessible landscapes.

In this context, Sweden for a trip after 65 defines itself as a continuous and well-organized territorial system, where archipelagos like Gothenburg, lakes like Mälaren, and compact cities like Uppsala and Kalmar allow for a slow, stable experience deeply rooted in the country's real geography.





## DID YOU KNOW?

In Sweden, there are little-known geographical phenomena related to the slow uplift of the land, called post-glacial rebound, which continues to alter the coastline of the Gulf of Bothnia today: in some areas of the Kvarken archipelago, between the coast of Västerbotten and Finland, new islands gradually emerge from the sea over the course of generations, measurably changing the local geography.

Another unique aspect concerns the system of cities built on islands and canals: the capital Stockholm is not only overlooking the water, but is spread across 14 islands connected by over 50 bridges, with a constant balance between the freshwater of Lake Mälaren and the saltwater of the Baltic Sea, a rare hydrological condition for a European capital.

In the north of the country, the city of Kiruna has become known for a unique urban development: the entire city center is being progressively relocated due to the expansion of one of the world's largest iron ore mines, resulting in a planned relocation of historic buildings and public facilities to a new site.

From a cultural perspective, the Skansen open-air museum is considered the first of its kind in the world: it brings together historic buildings from different regions of Sweden, reconstructing traditional rural and urban environments without resorting to copies, but preserving original structures transferred to the site.

Another peculiarity concerns the light: in the northernmost regions, such as around Abisko, the winter sky is considered among the clearest in the world for observing the Northern Lights, thanks to dry climatic conditions and the geographical position protected by the surrounding mountains.

Finally, Sweden is one of the countries with the highest percentage of forests in Europe, but what is often surprising is that many of these areas are freely accessible thanks to the legal principle of “Allemansrätten,” which allows anyone to roam through nature, pick berries, and cross uncultivated land while respecting the environment and private property.



# FINLAND – A TRANSITIONAL TERRITORY BETWEEN THE BALTIC, INLAND LAKES AND SUBARCTIC REGIONS, WHERE THE GEOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE HAS DIRECTLY GUIDED THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL FORMATION OF THE COUNTRY



Located in the northeastern part of Fennoscandia, Finland is a region where the relationship between sea, lakes, and forests is the dominant structural element. The country is defined primarily by the coastline of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Finland, but above all by a unique inland system in Europe: an expanse of thousands of interconnected lakes, including Lake Saimaa, the country's largest, and Lake Päijänne. These, together with the vast boreal forests of the Karelia region and central Finland, define the country's environmental structure.

To understand Finland's identity, it is necessary to begin with the earliest phases of human occupation after the Ice Age, when retreating ice made the Baltic coastal areas and inland lake regions habitable. In this context, communities of Mesolithic Finno-Baltic hunter-gatherer populations developed. These populations cannot be identified with modern ethnic groups but are linked to the region's post-glacial cultural complexes. Their settlements were distributed along the coasts, forests, and lake basins, based on fishing, hunting, and seasonal mobility.

Subsequently, between the Iron Age and the Early Middle Ages, Finland gradually entered the cultural and commercial orbit of both the Baltic world and the Scandinavian and Eastern regions. The coastal areas of the Gulf of Finland and the Gulf of Bothnia became trading hubs, while the inland regions remained characterized by scattered settlements and local systems. During this period, sites such as Turku emerged, which would later become one of the country's main historical centers.

During the Middle Ages, between the 13th and 16th centuries, Finland was gradually integrated into the Kingdom of Sweden, a process that led to the founding and development of administrative and religious centers along the southwestern coast and inland waterways. Turku assumed the role of administrative and episcopal capital, becoming the main urban center of the Finnish territory.

Contemporary Finland is divided into well-defined geographical macro-regions:

- SOUTHERN FINLAND – INCLUDES THE HELSINKI AREA AND THE GULF OF FINLAND, WITH CITIES SUCH AS HELSINKI AND ESPOO, CHARACTERISED BY A RUGGED COASTLINE AND ARCHIPELAGOS
- WESTERN FINLAND – COASTAL STRIP ON THE GULF OF BOTHNIA WITH CITIES SUCH AS TURKU AND ISLAND SYSTEMS SUCH AS THE TURKU ARCHIPELAGO
- CENTRAL FINLAND – AREA OF THE GREAT INLAND LAKES, WITH LAKE SAIMAA AND LAKE PÄIJÄNNE, AS WELL AS VAST BOREAL FORESTS
- EASTERN FINLAND (FINNISH KARELIA) – FOREST AND LAKE REGION BORDERING RUSSIA, CHARACTERIZED BY LOW POPULATION DENSITY
- NORTHERN FINLAND (FINNISH LAPLAND) – SUBARCTIC AND ARCTIC AREA EXTENDING TO THE ARCTIC CIRCLE, WITH CITIES SUCH AS ROVANIEMI

The Finnish airport network reflects the geographical distribution of the country and directly connects the main macro-areas:

- Helsinki-Vantaa Airport - Main international hub and gateway to Southern Finland
- Turku Airport - Gateway to Southwestern Finland and the archipelago
- Tampere-Pirkkala Airport - Access to Central Finland and the Lake District
- Rovaniemi Airport - Gateway to Finnish Lapland and the Arctic regions

Finland is a territorial system strongly influenced by water and forest, in which the Baltic coast, archipelagos, inland lakes, and Arctic regions form a geographical continuum. Its historical identity, from post-glacial communities to integration into the Scandinavian world and the formation of the modern state, is directly linked to this environmental structure.

# BETWEEN SILENT LAKES, COMPACT CITIES AND ACCESSIBLE FORESTS WITHOUT HEIGHT CHANGES

## PLACES AND EXPERIENCES FOR AN OVER-65 TRIP OFF THE BEATEN PATH

A trip to Finland after age 65 unfolds naturally thanks to an extremely readable territorial structure: small cities, well-organized distances, and a reliable transportation system that connects lakes, coasts, and inland areas without logistical complexity. The experience is built at a slow pace, with gradual journeys and frequent stops in quiet, well-served settings.

From a natural perspective, the southeastern lake system is one of the most suitable areas for a relaxing trip. Lake Saimaa, near Savonlinna, offers continuous landscapes of water and forest, with boat connections and flat walks along the historic harbor dominated by Olavinlinna. Further north, the Koli National Park area in the North Karelia region offers scenic spots accessible via short, well-marked trails overlooking Lake Pielinen.

The city's urban scale is one of the most favorable elements for this type of trip. Helsinki has a compact and well-connected city center, where Senate Square, the port, and the Katajanokka district are easily accessible on foot or by efficient public transportation. Tampere, located between Lakes Näsijärvi and Pyhäjärvi, also offers a linear urban structure, with museums like the Vapriikki Museum Centre concentrated in an easily walkable area.

Historically and culturally, Finland offers experiences that are well-integrated into the landscape and easily accessible. In Porvoo, the wooden old town along the Porvoonjoki River retains a compact medieval layout, with flat streets and well-preserved historic buildings. In Turku, Turku Castle and Turku Cathedral recount the earliest phase of Finnish history, when the city was the country's main administrative center under Swedish influence.

Finally, the coastal and island dimension offers tranquil and well-organized alternatives. In the Turku Archipelago area, regular connections allow you to reach islands like Nauvo, with coastal villages, small ports, and flat seafront paths. The Archipelago Sea National Park system also allows you to explore natural environments without major changes in altitude, thanks to local ferries and light infrastructure.

In this context, Finland appears to be a country of great balance for those over 65: lakes like Saimaa, compact cities like Helsinki and Tampere, and archipelagos like Turku allow for a complete but never complex experience, where nature, culture, and history integrate seamlessly and accessibly.





## DID YOU KNOW?

In Finland, the relationship between humanity and nature unfolds on a territorial scale dominated by water and forests, in a balance that makes the country one of the least densely populated in Europe and at the same time one of the richest in lake ecosystems. One of the most distinctive features is the presence of approximately 188,000 lakes, distributed mainly in the southeastern and central regions, which have influenced settlement and communication patterns for centuries. Among the most significant are Lake Saimaa, the country's largest, and Lake Päijänne, connected to river systems and canals that still support cities and villages today. The structure of the territory is closely linked to the so-called "Finnish Lakeland," an area extending between cities such as Savonlinna, Mikkeli, and Jyväskylä, where water and coniferous forests alternate in a continuous landscape shaped by the last glaciation. This geological process also left behind the presence of smooth rocks, moraines and thousands of lake islands.

A particularly significant historical element is the bond between Finland and Sweden, which lasted over six centuries until 1809, the period during which the country's first urban and administrative structures developed. Cities like Turku, one of Finland's oldest urban centers, still represent this historical legacy today, with an urban layout that retains traces of medieval times and later Nordic influences.

From a cultural and identity perspective, Finland is strongly linked to the language and national tradition that emerged in the 19th century, particularly through the work of the epic poem Kalevala, collected by Elias Lönnrot, which contributed to the definition of modern Finnish cultural identity.

Another distinctive feature is the midnight sun phenomenon in northern regions, particularly in Lapland, where during the summer the sun doesn't set for weeks, while in winter the opposite phenomenon occurs, the long Arctic night. This profoundly affects the rhythm of daily life and traditional activities.

Finally, Finland is one of the countries with the highest integration between nature and sustainable energy: most of its electricity comes from hydroelectric, nuclear, and bioenergy sources, while the country's vast forests, covering over 70% of the territory, represent one of the country's main economic and environmental resources, managed according to some of the most stringent sustainable forest management criteria in the world.



# NETHERLANDS – A TERRITORY BUILT BETWEEN THE SEA, LANDS RECLAIMED FROM THE WATER AND A POLYCENTRIC URBAN NETWORK, WHERE HYDRAULIC GEOGRAPHY HAS SHAPED HISTORY, SETTLEMENTS AND NATIONAL IDENTITY



Located in the northwestern part of continental Europe, the Netherlands represents one of the world's most significant examples of continuous interaction between the natural environment and human intervention. First, the country is characterized by a structural relationship with the North Sea and the Rhine, Meuse, and Scheldt river systems, which over time have shaped a low-lying coastal plain, partly below sea level, complemented by dikes, canals, and reclaimed land (polders). The territory is thus defined by a dynamic balance between water and land, in which cities, ports, and countryside develop on artificially consolidated soils. The main urban areas are distributed along a continuous system known as the Randstad, which connects cities such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht, forming one of the most integrated urban concentrations in Europe.

To understand the identity of the Low Countries, it is necessary to begin with the first communities settled in the Rhine and Meuse river deltas, where already in pre-Roman times, groups of northern Germanic peoples settled on marshy lands subject to periodic flooding. In Roman times, these areas came under the Empire's influence as frontier regions of the Rhine Limes. Subsequently, between the Early Middle Ages and the 12th century, small feudal settlements and coastal communities developed, gradually beginning to build embankments and drainage systems. During this period, centers such as Utrecht and the commercial areas of the future North and South Holland emerged, while maritime activities began to connect the delta with the North Sea and the Hanseatic League. Between the 16th and 17th centuries, during the Dutch Golden Age, the Low Countries became one of Europe's leading commercial and naval powers. Cities like Amsterdam established themselves as global financial centers, while Rotterdam grew as a strategic port in the Rhine delta. This period also saw the consolidation of the first major hydraulic works, with the systematic construction of dams, canals, and polders that allowed for the expansion of habitable and agricultural land. The structure of the modern state thus arose directly from a continuous process of water management.

The Netherlands is divided into the following areas:

- **RANDSTAD (WESTERN URBAN AREA) – CONTINUOUS URBAN SYSTEM THAT INCLUDES AMSTERDAM, ROTTERDAM, THE HAGUE AND UTRECHT, THE ECONOMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL HEART OF THE COUNTRY**
- **NORTH (NOORD-NEDERLAND) – REGIONS OF GRONINGEN, FRIESLAND AND DRENTH, CHARACTERISED BY AGRICULTURAL PLAINS, COASTS ON THE NORTH SEA AND INLAND LAKE AREAS SUCH AS THE FRISIAN LAKE SYSTEM**
- **EAST (WEST NETHERLANDS) – AREA OF GELDERLAND AND OVERIJSEL, WITH RIVERS SUCH AS THE RHINE AND IJSSEL AND RIVER AND FOREST LANDSCAPES**
- **SOUTH (ZUID-NEDERLAND) – REGIONS OF NOORD-BRABANT AND LIMBURG, WITH STRONG RIVER INFLUENCE OF THE MEUSE AND CONNECTIONS TO BELGIUM AND GERMANY**
- **NORTH SEA ISLANDS – ARCHIPELAGO OF THE WEST FRISIAN ISLANDS (WADDEN ISLANDS), INCLUDING TEXEL, VLIELAND AND TERSCHELLING, A DYNAMIC NATURAL SYSTEM BETWEEN SEA AND LAND**

In support of the territorial structure, the airport network of the Netherlands is highly centralized but functionally distributed:

- **Amsterdam Airport Schiphol - Main international hub and access to the Randstad system**
- **Rotterdam The Hague Airport - Access to the Southwest and the North Sea Coast**
- **Eindhoven Airport - Access to the industrial and logistical south of the country**
- **Groningen Airport Eelde - Access to the North and Rural Regions**

The Netherlands is a highly anthropized territorial system in which the North Sea, river deltas, polders, cities, and hydraulic infrastructure form a single geographical entity. The country's identity stems precisely from this continuous relationship between water and land, which has guided its historical, urban, and economic development right up to its present-day configuration.

# BETWEEN COMPACT CITIES, SLOW CANALS AND EASILY ENJOYABLE WATER LANDSCAPES

## PLACES AND EXPERIENCES FOR AN OVER-65 TRIP OFF THE BEATEN PATH

A trip to the Netherlands after age 65 is particularly enjoyable thanks to its flat terrain, short distances, and a comprehensive transportation network connecting historic cities, villages, and natural areas without logistical complexity. The experience is built on a slow pace, with short trips and a strong connection between the urban environment and the landscape.

From a natural perspective, the coastal and lake system offers accessible and well-organized landscapes. The Wadden Islands, particularly Texel, offer a flat environment of dunes, cycle paths, and neat villages, with regular ferry connections. In the IJsselmeer area, cities like Enkhuizen and Hoorn offer lakefronts, historic ports, and compact, walkable urban centers.

The urban dimension is one of the country's main strengths. In Amsterdam, the canal system like the Grachtengordel allows for seamless enjoyment of the city, with museums like the Rijksmuseum and the Van Gogh Museum concentrated in well-connected areas. Utrecht also offers a compact historic center with street-level canals like the Oudegracht, easily accessible and without significant changes in level.

The cultural and historical dimension unfolds in urban centers linked to the country's commercial and artistic history. In Haarlem, the Frans Hals Museum presents 17th-century Dutch painting in a compact urban setting. In Leiden, the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden and the historic canals offer a simple and linear reading of urban history, while in Delft, the historic center of brick and blue ceramics develops within a compact and flat urban plan.

Regionally, rural areas also offer relaxed and easily accessible experiences. In the Veluwe region, De Hoge Veluwe National Park offers flat trails through forests and inland dunes, with regulated access and well-distributed services. In the Drenthe region, villages like Orvelte offer a tidy rural environment, with historic architecture and easily accessible paths.

In this context, the Netherlands presents itself as an ideal destination for an audience over 65: compact cities like Amsterdam, Utrecht and Delft, water systems like the IJsselmeer and urban canals, and natural areas like the Veluwe and the Wadden Islands create a continuous, accessible and deeply understandable journey, without the need for complex routes or demanding journeys.





## DID YOU KNOW?

In the Netherlands, the relationship between people and land is one of the most closely intertwined and engineered in the world, so much so that a significant portion of the country lies below sea level and is constantly protected by an advanced system of dikes, barriers, and hydraulic works that have transformed water from a threat to a structural element of the landscape. Much of the current territory is, in fact, the result of centuries of land reclamation and polders, areas of land reclaimed from the sea or lakes and made habitable through a complex drainage system. This context also includes the Afsluitdijk, the large dam that separated the Zuiderzee, transforming it into the present-day IJsselmeer, radically altering the geography of the north of the country. Another iconic element is the Delta Works system, considered among the most complex coastal defense systems in the world, designed to protect the southwestern regions after the great flood of 1953. In these same areas, the landscape alternates between dikes, artificial islands, and nature reserves such as the Oosterschelde, where the water remains subject to the influence of the tides to this day.

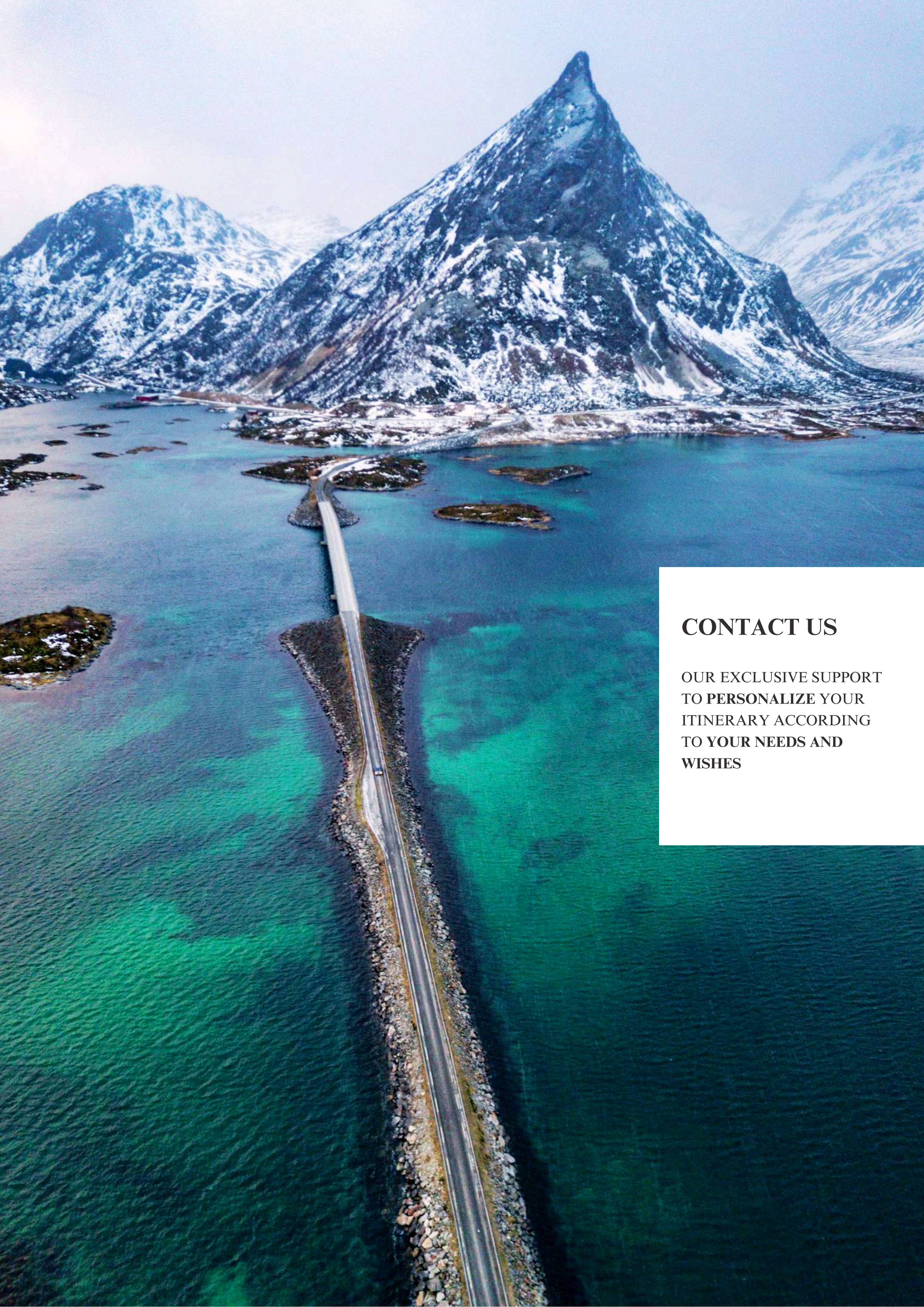
The Netherlands is also one of the most cycle-friendly countries in Europe, with an extremely extensive network of cycle paths and dedicated infrastructure that seamlessly connects cities, villages and natural areas, making cycling one of the main means of daily travel.

Historically and economically, the country played a central role in global trade routes between the 16th and 17th centuries, thanks to the Dutch East India Company (VOC), one of the first major multinational companies in history, which contributed to the development of port cities such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam and the creation of intercontinental trade networks.

Some cultural elements have become internationally recognizable symbols, such as the Kinderdijk windmills, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, originally part of the water management system, or the cheese markets of Alkmaar and Gouda, which reflect a still-living commercial tradition linked to the historic city centers.

Floriculture also plays a central role in the country's identity, with the Aalsmeer flower market representing one of the sector's main global hubs, while the tulip fields that bloom between spring and early summer transform some regions into geometric and colorful landscapes.

Finally, the relationship with water has also influenced the shape of cities: Amsterdam, with its UNESCO-recognized system of concentric canals, and Rotterdam, rebuilt in a modern style after the Second World War, represent two different interpretations of the same fundamental element, water, which continues to define the country's overall identity.



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