

## FAROE ISLANDS

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Though under the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark, the Faroe Islands are self-governing and have their own flag, language, postal stamps and a history that the Faroese people can lay claim as truly their own, dating all the way to 400AD, long before the arrival of the Vikings in the 9th century, when it was said that the first parliament was held as early as 825, on the site that is now Torshavn.

The Faroe Islands are known worldwide for its surreal natural beauty, with its sheer sea cliffs, rolling mountains covered in wild grass, and the distinct lack of trees. While fjords cut through the islands, narrow waterways snake between them. And though temperate, the islands are kept warm by the Gulf Stream, making for mild winters and cool summers, with fog and strong winds as weather staples. And in places where you least expect it, are breathtaking waterfalls and rivers.

The islands are also home to a variety of bird and animal species, from the common puffins and razorbills to the starlings and wrens, to breeds of domesticated animals only local to the island like the Faroe pony, Faroe cow and Faroe sheep. And out in the waters, grazing and hunting the islands' seas are the local seals and whales.

Truly, the best thing to do whilst in the Faroe Islands is to immerse yourself in its unique nature, which differ from island to island. From the deep grottoes and narrow straits of Vestmanna Bird Cliffs to the high mountains and lagoon in Saksun, and the majesty of the Bøsdalafossur waterfall, as it cascades directly down into the open Atlantic Ocean from the cliff-side Leitisvatn lake.

And for those looking for a quick respite from nature, Faroe Islands offers truly unique historical, cultural and gastronomic experiences. Here, travelers can visit one of the world's oldest inhabited log houses, and a church from the Middle Ages still in use. And during the long dark nights of winter, perhaps enjoy a warm cup of hot chocolate as you listen to an intimate acoustic concert from the comforts of a Faroese family's living room. And for the culinary adventurous, the Faroe Islands offers a wide variety of cuisines that excited the senses – from the traditional ræst (a unique and traditional method of fermentation) to internationally-acclaimed creations from the likes of Poul Andrias Ziska, head chef at Torshavn restaurant, KOKS.

Though small in size, the Faroe Islands is truly a mighty contender for travelers looking for nature, adventure, serenity, and a truly unique experience.

## Did You Know?

- ❖ All the public buses in the capital, Torshavn, are free! However, there are only 4 bus routes, but that is enough to get around the city with no problems. The city is also home to the only three traffic lights on the island, and there are no McDonald's restaurants anywhere on the islands. You can, however, find a Burger King, in Torshavn if you're in need of a quick burger and fries fix with a side of soda.
- ❖ The Faroe Islands is a cultural melting pot with over 75+ nationalities living across its islands from a total population of a mere 48,600.
- ❖ You are never more than 3 miles/5 kilometers away from the sea, when in the Faroe Islands.
- ❖ There are more sheep in the Faroe Islands, than there are people, and can be a nuisance and danger to both travelers and locals if they wander onto the roads (since Faroe sheep like to lick the salt off of the roads!). You may find sheep with reflective straps on their legs, which makes them more visible in the dark or in bad weather.
- ❖ There are no prisons on the Faroe Islands. Any long term prisoners are sent to serve their sentences in Denmark.

