

Oslo, Norway: A Disney Cruise Line Port Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

Next summer, the Disney Magic steers a course to Northern Europe, making stops at various capital cities along the way.

Without a doubt, my favourite of the ports it will be visiting is Oslo in Norway.

Oslo is a place I'd been wanting to visit for many years, as I just loved the idea of going to Norway. I must have been ahead of the game, as this was many years before Frozen even became a glimmer in an Imagineer's eye! So why was I so keen on heading to this country? A lot of it was simply down to the Norway pavilion in Epcot, which I absolutely adored. As a result, one of the must-do places for me to visit was the real Akerhus fortress (not a castle technically, although it looks like one), which is located on the waterfront of Oslo Harbour.

□ From Akerhus fortress, you get some wonderful views of the city of Oslo and the activity in the harbor below. And as I'll mention in a moment, there's lots of activity there. Building on this site dates back to the 13th century, and you can see immediately that this is a structure that's stood for many hundreds of years, with its thick stone walls. We were lucky enough to enjoy the place almost to ourselves, having arrived literally at opening time -- thank you Disney for ensuring I often use this as a strategy on vacation!

□ The main part of Oslo city centre is located around Karl Johans Gate, a huge street that runs all the way from the Slottet or Royal Palace, situated in a large park, down to the Stortinget, the Norwegian Parliament building. If you love architecture, a stroll along this half-mile stretch of road will be very rewarding for you.

Closer to the Oslo harbour is another building well worth seeing: the Radhuset or City Hall. Admittedly from the outside, it is one of the ugliest buildings I've seen in a long time (and sadly it is in a prominent position in Oslo), but step inside and some stunning rooms await you. The Nobel Peace Prize is presented here each year in December, and as you'd imagine, the rooms here befit an occasion of that grandeur. It's even more impressive in that this luxury only dates from 1950, when the building was constructed to celebrate Oslo's 900th anniversary.

□ Oslo harbour is a thriving area. One reason for that is that if you want to see any of the city's major museums, you'll need to take a boat over to

the Bygdoy area. Perhaps the stand-out museum here is the Viking Ship Museum, which is home to two Viking ships from the ninth century, both of which are beautifully preserved. Parts of a third can also be seen here. All were found in burial mounds, and it is truly amazing to stand in this museum and look at these magnificent vessels, knowing that they were put to use more than 1,000 years ago.

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□ Located close by is the Norwegian Folk Museum, and if you want to see real life stave churches, this is the place to go. It's an open air museum, packed with buildings from across Norway, showcasing how life used to be, and you'll definitely get a feel of Epcot here, as you'll also find wooden buildings with grass roofs here.

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□ Another museum well worth seeing is the Fram Museum, which contains the sailing ship that was used for Arctic and Antarctic expeditions in the late 19th and early 20th century. Looking at it, it seems so fragile, and you just can't imagine it going into such hostile climates of the world.

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□ Further outside of the city, there are plenty of other sights to see, although with just the day in port, the chances are you'll want to include them on a shore excursion, rather than trying to make your own arrangements to get there. The first is the Vigeland Sculpture Park, named after the sculptor responsible for the 200 plus statues in here, depicting humanity in all its forms. It's certainly a strange sight, but it's something well worth seeing, as there really is nothing like it anywhere else in the world.

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□ Somewhere else well worth a visit is the Holmenkollen, the city's ski jump, used in the 1952 Winter Olympics. It offers some very dramatic views during the summer months, although it is a climb to get here. We both stood there at the top of the jump, marvelling at how anyone has the courage to descend from here on skis!

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□ During our stay in Oslo, we also took a short, but very magical cruise along some of the fjords surrounding the city. The scenery was absolutely beautiful, although of course if you're on a cruise, this may be old news to you, with stunning scenery something that will no doubt become the norm during your time on board the Magic.

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□ If you're getting the impression that there's plenty to do in Oslo, that's because there is. We spent three days in the city, and we were never bored, with plenty to see and do. The only problem you'll have if you're visiting Oslo on the Magic is working out what to do with the limited time you'll have in this beautiful place.

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□ The Disney Magic makes just the one visit to Oslo in summer 2015 on the 11-night Norwegian Fjords and Iceland cruise, which departs from Copenhagen, Denmark on June, 29. Sadly, if you're not already booked on this itinerary, you're out of luck, as it's sold out.

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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