

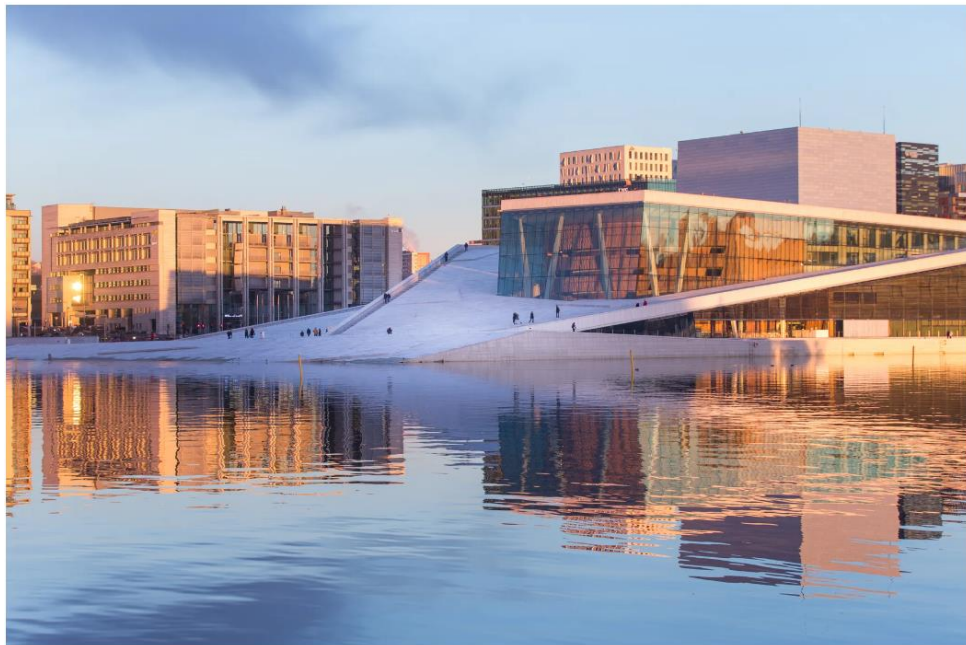
VOGUE

TRAVEL

10 Hidden Gems to Discover in Oslo

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The Oslo National Opera House.
Photo: Getty Images

In the vibrant, cosmopolitan city of [Oslo](#), modernity and historical charm seamlessly blend together. Whether you prefer to immerse yourself in the hustle and bustle of the city or seek refuge in nature, Norway's capital offers the perfect mix of both worlds—boasting stunning fjords, picturesque parks, numerous museums, world-class architecture, trendy shops, and a thriving art scene.

When in Oslo, many stick to the typical tourist attractions and historical landmarks—and honestly, there's nothing wrong with that. But if you're someone who likes to stray off the beaten path, the spontaneous traveler in you might be craving more unique experiences. Fortunately, there's no shortage of them in Oslo—read on to discover *Vogue's* pick of the city's greatest hidden gems.

I. Stay at Villa Inkognito



Francisco Nogueira

Experience the ultimate retreat at [Villa Inkognito](#), the latest addition to the trendy [Sommerro](#) hotel. For guests looking for a truly private hideaway, Villa Inkognito offers an unparalleled sense of escape that transports you to a world of relaxation from the moment you arrive. With only 11 suites available, and a discreet entrance separate from Sommerro, you're given the rare opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and enjoy a more intimate stay. But don't think you'll be missing out on all the action—an interconnecting bridge within the villa provides complete access to Sommerro's wide-ranging amenities.

Designed by leading interior studio Grecodeco, the villa's 11 suites are inspired by a range of eras including Classic Norwegian, Art Nouveau, and a touch of Japonisme. The hotel's home-away-from-home feel extends to the various spaces to unwind, including the living room, the library, a snug room, an open kitchen, an intimate bar, a fitness room, and an expansive outdoor area. The rooms, meanwhile, are packed with delightful design details, including lavish textiles, bespoke hand-knotted rugs, and bespoke Scandi furnishings.

Every guest is treated like a VIP, with personal hosts on hand to ensure your stay is as seamless and exceptional as possible, including a "Lady of the House" who brings an additional touch of warmth and hospitality that you'll struggle to find anywhere else. With her help, you can discover the best of the neighborhood, shake up a delicious cocktail at the intimate bar, and create long-lasting memories. In fact, you probably won't want to leave at all.

2. Go on a Floating Sauna Cruise



Kok's private sauna cruise is a unique experience that combines the therapeutic benefits of a traditional wood-fired Finnish sauna with the beauty of nature—all while floating along the stunning fjords. Step away from the fast pace of the city for a serene, rejuvenating voyage. You'll get to soak up the breathtaking panoramic views whilst alternating between the steamy hot sauna and cool dips in the refreshing lake water.

3. Explore Grünerløkka



Didrick Stehensen

Grünerløkka is a young, hip neighborhood that has a distinctly bohemian vibe. Walking through the streets, you'll be treated to colorful murals, independent stores, trendy coffee shops, and quirky bars. If you're someone who likes to pick up a few unique items on your travels, Grünerløkka is the place to find them. The area is home to a number of fashionable boutiques, including Utro, Dapper Oslo, and Maanesten. If you're in the city over the weekend, meanwhile, make sure you stop by the Birkelunden Flea Market. Here, you'll find fashion aficionados mingling amongst collectors and deal-seekers as they wander through a seemingly never-ending array of vintage apparel, costume jewelry, and antique furniture. There's also an arts and crafts fair where talented local creatives sell everything from handmade jewelry to original artwork.

5. Walk on Top of the National Opera House



Oslo's National Opera House is not only an architectural masterpiece (the structure, which is clad in Carrara marble, was designed by the Norwegian firm Snohetta), but it's also the only opera house in the world where the public is allowed to walk on the roof at any time of the day. Where in other countries this might get you arrested, in Oslo, it's actively encouraged. The unique building has a sloping roof, which makes accessing the top very easy—and once you ascend, you're provided with a brand-new perspective of the architecture, as well as a breathtaking view of the surrounding mountains and the city skyline.

6. Have a Cocktail at Pier 42



Located in the heart of Oslo, inside the Amerikalinjen Hotel, lies Pier 42, an award-winning cocktail bar that every cocktail enthusiast must try. It's expertly led and managed by the Diageo World Class Global Bartender of the Year, Adrián Michalčík, so it comes as no surprise that the property has been voted the best cocktail bar in Norway by the Bartenders' Choice Awards for two consecutive years. The establishment's name is derived from Den Norske Amerikalinjen, a shipping company and transatlantic line that carried thousands of Norwegians with dreams of a better life to America in 1915. These travelers set foot on New York City's port, Pier 42, marking the beginning of their journey, with the name of the bar paying tribute to that inspiring beginning.

The bar's creative mixologists have concocted a lineup of ten unique cocktails, each drawing inspiration from film, theater, art, literature, and music. The aim is to provide each guest with an unforgettable cocktail experience. My personal favorite is New York, New York, inspired by the classic 1977 Frank Sinatra hit— the delightful blend of gin, green apple, aloe vera, elderflower, and wasabi provides a truly unique taste.

7. Take a Day Trip to Kistefos Museum



Vegard Kleven

Go on a little adventure and head to [Kistefos Museum](#), located about an hour east of Oslo. The drive to the sculpture park allows you to see the scenic beauty of Norway—I guarantee you, you'll want to stop to take a few pictures.

The museum is all about the unexpected, with a rotating lineup of globally-recognized artworks in a deeply atmospheric rural setting. It not only has an industrial museum, but also two art galleries and an outdoor garden featuring 51 impressive sculptures by internationally acclaimed artists like Yayoi Kusama, Tony Cragg, and Marianne Heske—and finally, plenty of world-class architecture, including *The Twist*, by BIG, or the Bjarke Ingels Group.

8. Dine at TAK



Be sure to secure a dinner reservation at [TAK](#), a Nordic-Japanese rooftop restaurant by the award-winning chef, Frida Ronge. The restaurant opened in September 2022, and showcases Ronge's unique Nordic-Japanese style, featuring dishes that combine fresh, local Norwegian produce with traditional Japanese cooking methods. Don't miss out on the must-try Nordic classic, Skagen Toast, given an unexpected yet delicious twist with a splash of Japanese yuzu *koshō*. It's the perfect bite to transport your taste buds on a culinary journey through Scandinavia and Japan. Dining at TAK is a full sensory experience, from the unique crockery to the carefully curated music—and, of course, panoramic views of the city.

9. Visit the National Museum



Didrick Stenersen

Stepping inside [The National Museum](#), which opened its doors in June 2022, you instantly appreciate its unique approach. There are no large crowds or endless queues to contend with, making it a true haven for anyone who loves art. The museum's vast collection encompasses everything from design and crafts to contemporary art, including the famous Norwegian artist Edvard Munch's most iconic painting, *The Scream*. In addition to the museum's permanent displays, they also have a number of temporary exhibitions throughout the year, ensuring there's always something new and interesting to see. Visitors can also explore the museum library, which is stocked with a wide selection of books, catalogs, publications, and other printed material related to the exhibitions.