

MAGIC FOR MEETINGS



Peculiar for its remoteness, yet only a two-hour flight from Copenhagen, the Faroe Islands offers an exotic blend of natural beauty and modernity—increasingly enticing for conference-goers in search of the perfect getaway.

THE MATURING TOURISM sector in the Faroe Islands, including the growing conference business, could be taken as a clear testimony to the country's pre-eminence in providing the best of three worlds: proud cultural heritage, unspoiled natural surroundings, and advanced conference facilities and services.

The weather-beaten islands in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean provide an inexhaustible source of inspiration for locals and visitors alike—those towering rocks and mountainous hills, carpeted by bright green grass in the summer or covered by white snow in the winter.

Whether viewed from a helicopter, a sightseeing boat, or a hiking trip, the archipelago is truly awe-inspiring. With shorelines featuring astonishing bird cliffs and sea grottoes, the compact



mountain and valley formations were molded out of underwater volcanic blasts millions of years ago and subsequently shaped by massive glaciers forcing their way through the landscape to form valleys and peaks. But that was a very long time ago and today there are neither active volcanoes nor glaciers in the Faroe Islands, which may be just as well.

Now add the magic mist that creeps in out of the blue to shroud the land, or just part of it, and you might be about to understand the Faroese mentality.

The people appear as serene as the solid rock on which they are raised. They're proud of their unique cultural heritage, yes; but they're nonetheless



View from the Sornfelli mountain (far left); Nordic fisheries conference (left); sailing along the coastline (bottom left); Director Súsanna Sørensen (below).

eager to participate in the age of digital technology and globalization.

Perhaps out of necessity, perhaps out of adventurism, the Faroese have set out to develop their country as an attractive tourism destination, offering some very clear advantages.

"This is the ideal place to de-stress and at the same time experience something very unique, wonderful, and energizing," says Director Súsanna Sørensen, of VisitFaroeIslands.

'NO MASS TOURISM': Recent years have seen some remarkable progress in the tourism business, most particularly in the capital of Tórshavn: the development of a 5-star conference facility and the addition of another state-of-the-art conference venue, an overall increase in accommodation capacity, an upgrade of existing hotels, and the opening of a number of new cafes and restaurants.

But for all the services and facilities found in Tórshavn, many tourists are attracted to the outer villages to experience traditional Faroese lifestyle. The small size of the country and its well-developed road, ferry, and helicopter infrastructure makes it quick and easy to travel from one part to the other and the length of the journey is often less than half an hour, only rarely more than a couple of hours.

The development of the tourism sector has helped pave the way for team building activities and adventure tourism, frequently combined with conferences or seminars. Here, the proximity of wild, unspoiled nature, whether land or sea, comes in handy.

"We believe the variety of experiences is very important," Ms. Sørensen says. "The idea is, you go to the Faroe Islands to learn new facts or new skills, to meet new friends and at the same time experience nature up close, relax, and recharge your batteries."

The miniature world of the Faroe Islands usually implies that everything you need is easily accessible and within close range—for example, most services you may require are often within walking distance.

"You have everything at your fingertips here," says Ms. Sørensen. "Many business travelers choose to stay in Tórshavn—and then in their off-hours go to places like Saksun, Gjógv, Viðareiði, Mykines, Sandur, or Sumba. It's become very convenient to combine dwelling in the capital with daily or semi-daily excursions."



VisitFaroeIslands

Bryggjubakk, PO Box 118,
FO-110 Tórshavn

www.VisitFaroeIslands.com
info@VisitFaroeIslands.com
Tel.: +298 306 100

VisitFaroeIslands is the tourist board of the Faroe Islands and is organized as a department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The objective is to market and develop the Faroe Islands as a tourism destination in close contact with the tourism business of the Faroe Islands.

Director: Súsanna Sørensen

The most popular excursions include schooner or boat trips around the islands, bus trips to old villages, helicopter trips to some of the more outlying islands and villages, and mountain hiking.

Says Ms. Sørensen: "You stay in one place and the next moment you find yourself in an entirely different environment—the diversity is just amazing. So we have great conference facilities and services, and everything is easily accessible; and it's all set in stunning natural surroundings.

"But what probably is the most important part for most visitors is that we have managed to integrate ancient traditions as a natural part of our modern lives.

"And of course, we're definitely not betting on mass tourism."