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HEATS UP**

City Stay: *Oslo*

BY JESSICA COLLEY



Clockwise from above: The Oslo Opera House; the new Mathallen Food Hall; the Norwegian fjords.

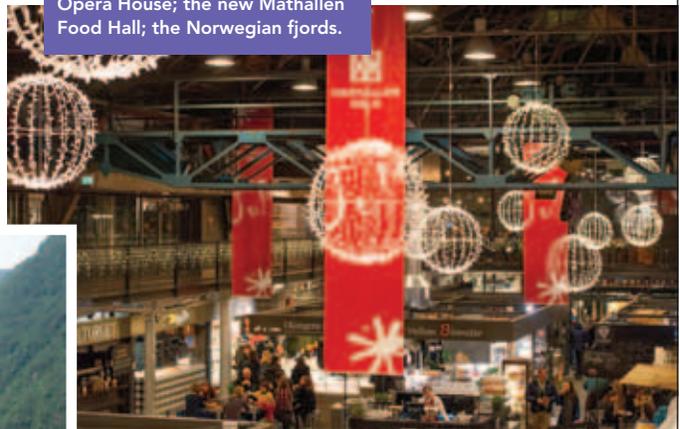
Norway's capital city of Oslo is at the heart of Scandinavia—both on the map and in its sensibility. This thriving city of 600,000 inhabitants is in the midst of an urban renewal, with new waterfront restaurants, arts districts and museums throwing open the doors in recent years. So plan a visit to indulge in the local design, Nordic style of cooking and beautiful nature, from canals to fjords.



WHERE TO STAY: Hotels in Oslo all have a distinct design edge, including properties from familiar brands. Both the Clarion Collection Hotel Folketeateret and the Comfort Hotel Grand Central offer artistically appointed rooms with amenities such as complimentary breakfast and Wi-Fi.

WHERE TO EAT: The new center of tasting, shopping and drinking in Oslo is Mathallen, a food hall showcasing Norwegian small-scale products. Chefs, locals and visitors are all drawn here by the quality cafés, specialty shops and restaurants. In addition to being the home of food festivals and competitions in Oslo, Mathallen is also the place to pick up picnic supplies or design-focused kitchen utensils. To rub elbows with locals, simply join them in their strong affinity for coffee. Grab an afternoon perk at Tim Wendelboe, a micro roastery so passionate about serving the perfect cup that it also offers barista courses to help you re-create it at home. Food-wise, when in Oslo you must eat seafood, and specifically at a waterfront restaurant such as Lofoten Fiskerestaurant or Tjuvholmen.

WHAT TO DO: Fill your days with two of the best things Oslo has to offer: nature and culture. Start with a ferry island-hopping tour and spend the day admiring the fjords, swimming and



sunbathing or having a picnic. Get your culture fix in the new arts district of Oslo, Tjuvholmen. This waterfront neighborhood is home to the Astrup Fearnley Museet, a museum of modern art set in an impressive building. The year 2013 is a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Norwegian artist Edvard Munch, so you will find comprehensive exhibitions of his work at both the Munch Museum and the National Gallery. Families traveling with kids might want to check out the Viking Ship Museum or the TusenFryd amusement park, while those interested in exploring Oslo's emerging neighborhoods should follow one of the self-guided walking tours called "Escape Routes" focused on themes such as design and architecture.

WHERE TO SHOP: Grünerløkka is a neighborhood with a young and trendy reputation, appealing to shoppers seeking jewelry, art and one-of-a-kind clothing. For vintage shopping, take a stroll along Markveien and peek into Lucky Buttons or Frøken Dianas Salonger. Sunday is market day in Grünerløkka, with even more design products and vintage knickknacks in the neighborhood. One shopping alternative is Aker Brygge, a neighborhood tucked away on a wharf with a seafront boardwalk. Here, dozens of shops and restaurants are set against a backdrop of contemporary architecture and old shipyard buildings. **TL**

Call your Travel Leaders agent today to book your Oslo trip.