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With tourism in Norway seeing a welcome influx of visitors over the past decade, lured by the country's incredible natural beauty and outdoor charms, the city of Stavanger is fast becoming one of the jewels of Scandinavia.

With a population of approximately 130,000, Stavanger is the fourth largest city in Norway and offers plenty for the adventurous traveller.

Hiking is one of the favoured activities of tourists visiting this region, and it's easy to discover why. The landscape is stunning and offers world-class hiking and treks. If you are feeling energetic, then the hike to the top of Preikestolen is a must-do. This famous summit, also referred to as Pulpit Rock, is a frighteningly sheer cliff with a flat plateau, looming 604 metres above the beautiful fjord Lysefjorden.

Kjerga is another popular hike, nearby to the Preikestolen. Known for the famous Kjeragbolten, a small chockstone, wedged precariously between two cliffs, levitating 500 metres above the icy waters. Many tourists pose nervously for novelty photos of them balancing atop the famous stone.

If you don't like hiking, or heights, then visitors can enjoy the immense beauty of the great fjords and the extraordinary grandeur of the surrounding cliffs from the water, aboard one of the many boat tours that depart daily from Stavanger Harbour.

As well as plenty of hiking opportunities, Stavanger has many other sport activities on offer. Travellers can hit the nearby alpine slopes for some skiing or snowboarding, with excellent conditions throughout the winter. Come summertime, there are several large, sandy beaches beckoning holidaymakers and locals alike. Solastranden, within close proximity to Stavanger's airport, is one of the most popular of Stavanger's beaches, being one of Norway's most beautiful.

The city centre of Stavanger itself is beautiful, particularly the old town, Gamle Stavanger which is always a favourite amongst visitors. With narrow cobblestone alleys meandering throughout, lined by traditional wooden houses dating back to the 1800s, this pretty area is populated with local artists and has a unique charm about it.

As well as the old town, there are several other must see historical attractions within the city centre, close to your Hotel Stavanger that will help shed some light on this fascinating city and its story.

The state of the art Petroleum Museum is dedicated to Stavanger's rise to the oil capital of Norway and the Canning Museum is a nod to the local sardine canning industry which brought significant wealth to the city in the early 20th century. The Stavanger Domkirke, in the heart of the city, is Norway's oldest cathedral. Founded in 1125, the building is an important religious sight for many Norwegians. As well as admiring the beautiful outside of the building, be sure to explore the elegant interior.

Stavanger is a remarkable beautiful city, with a rich heritage and surrounded by incredible natural attractions. If you are heading to Norway, be sure to mark Stavanger on your map, and plan for a good few days to properly explore.

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