

Colourful authentic  
Norwegian houses.



# MY MAIDEN FISHING TRIP TO NORWAY, FINALLY!

————— *Text and photos: Text: Sam van Ierland. Photos: Sam van Ierland and Joris Nieuwenhoff.* —————

**Unspoilt nature, never-ending scenery, crystal clear, rugged waters and, above all, fish. Big fish! Anyone reading this will know which country this article is about: Norway! Sam van Ierland had been dreaming of going there for several years, and recently he finally got the chance. He happily recaptures his experiences...**



The travelling duo with one of the highlights of the trip.

**I**n recent years, I have had the opportunity to explore the more southern seas. I have caught many different species of fish in both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, with a real blue marlin as the icing on the cake. But fishing in Norway, in the far north, had not yet been on the agenda. Of course, I had heard great stories about fishing there, especially from my dad, who has been there several times. So when I had the opportunity earlier this year to explore a location in central Norway with Joris Nieuwenhoff from [Worldsbestfishingtrips.com](https://www.worldsbestfishingtrips.com), I did not hesitate for a second. You can understand why! As an avid angler, the country is high on my wish list...



Pick your pick.

## THE JOURNEY

The location we are heading to is in Lauvsnes, a small coastal village in the middle of Norway, a two-hour drive from Trondheim Airport. Zanzibar Inn / Martini Camp is situated on a fjord with breathtaking views of the high surrounding mountains. It is a medium sized fishing camp right on the waterfront, consisting of three authentic and colourful Norwegian houses, which have been converted into several luxury apartments. But more importantly, there are twelve

The journey itself is already a pleasure.



Lauvsnes is not only home to moose, but we also encountered a number of sea eagles. These are truly impressive animals.



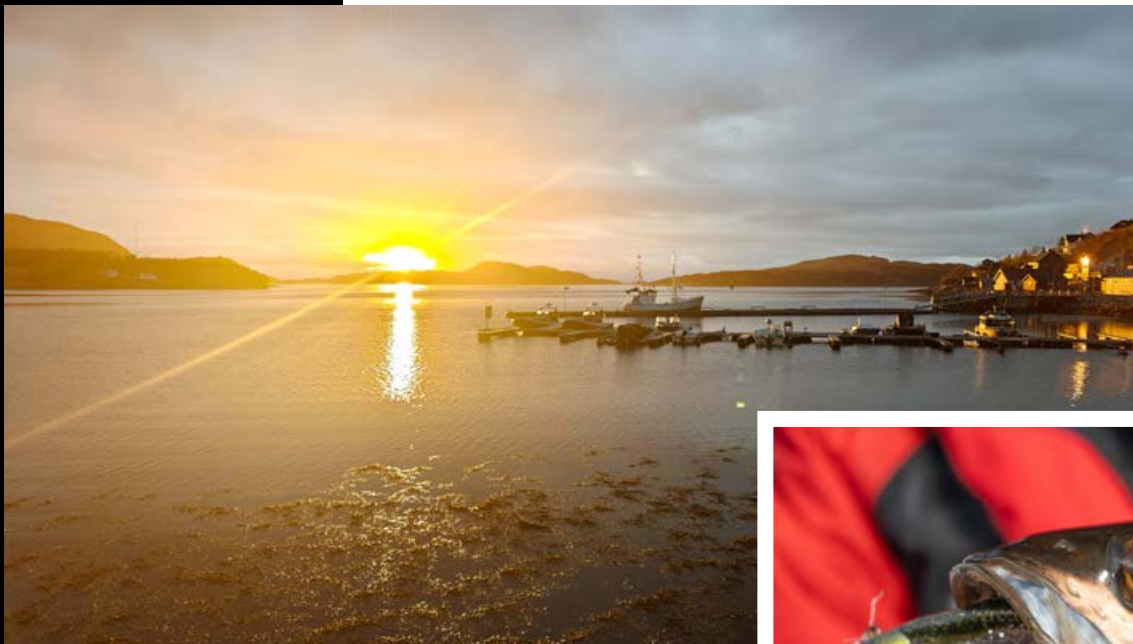
seaworthy fishing boats right on the doorstep! The journey itself was very smooth. At 9 o'clock in the morning, we board the plane to Trondheim. Two hours later, we breathe in the cool, pure Norwegian air. Let's get started! We picked up our rental car and set off. A magnificent drive past beautiful lakes, fast-flowing streams and through amazing forests where you have to watch out for moose and deer. The closer we get to Lauvsnes, the more beautiful the landscape becomes. All the more so when we reach the first fjords. My urge to fish is now becoming almost uncontrollable! The desire to cast a line here grows by the minute.

We quickly go shopping for dinner at the supermarket just opposite the camp, and while Joris is still busy with the staff at the fishing camp,

I am already casting small shads from the jetty with a light spinning rod. In no time at all, I catch my first Norwegian fish! A small cod. Small, but a nice start, and it doesn't stop there. In less than half an hour, I catch several of these beautifully marked cods. Enough fun time for now. Back to the apartment, unpack my suitcase, prepare my fishing gear and make a plan for tomorrow.

## DIVERSITY!

What makes Lauvsnes special is that the fishing is very diverse. What makes it even more special is fishing for pollock. The fjord has numerous underwater mountains with vegetation that pollock likes to inhabit. The best spots at this time of year are the structures that lie between 10 and 30 metres deep. As a true sea angler, this makes you very happy!



What more could one wish for?

## TRAVEL RODS

We decided not to take a rod case with us on this fishing trip, but to use travel rods that easily fit in our suitcases. That saves a lot of hassle at the airport and also on luggage costs. I packed three travel rods from the PENN Overseas II series and the Savage Gear SG4 series and three PENN Authority reels. A 20-30 lbs Overseas boat rod with a 5500 reel, a Savage Gear 30-80 gram spinning rod with a 4500 reel and, for light fishing, a 10-40 gram Overseas with a 3500 reel. The 20-30 lbs rod is for fishing in deeper water for halibut and large cod. The reel is equipped with 0.23 mm Spiderwire braid and a 0.90 mm fluorocarbon leader. The 30-80 gram rod with 0.17 mm Spiderwire braid and a short 0.50 fluorocarbon leader is intended for casting for pollock and cod with shads, pilks and sandeels. I used the light 10-40 gram spinning rod with the super strong 0.14 mm Berkley Sick 8 braid to fish for flatfish with flounder spoons and to jig with rubber lures and pirks from the shore.

For me, fishing for pollock was a completely new experience. It can best be compared to fishing for zander from the shore on the large rivers here in the Netherlands, but then, depending on the depth and current, with shads between 30 and 60 grams. We fish by drifting with the boat over the structures, covering large areas. During our fishing trip, the wind is quite strong, so we use a large drift bag, which allows us to fish with reasonable accuracy. A drift bag is definitely a must have in Norway. It ensures that the speed of the drift is considerably lower in stronger winds. That makes a big



difference to the weight of the lure required and therefore to whether or not you catch fish. My first pollock was a really good one. What a fight on such a light rod. I did suspect that these fish are strong, but my goodness, I really was not prepared for this. The drag on my reel is screaming. The smile on my face from here to the end of the world says it all when I look back at the photos!

**Pollock is a predator that is just made to be fished with artificial bait.**

**The fish with the big eye: Pollock!**





**They're not monsters, but that doesn't make it any less fun.**

**Cod that live in and alongside the kelp are often red in colour.**

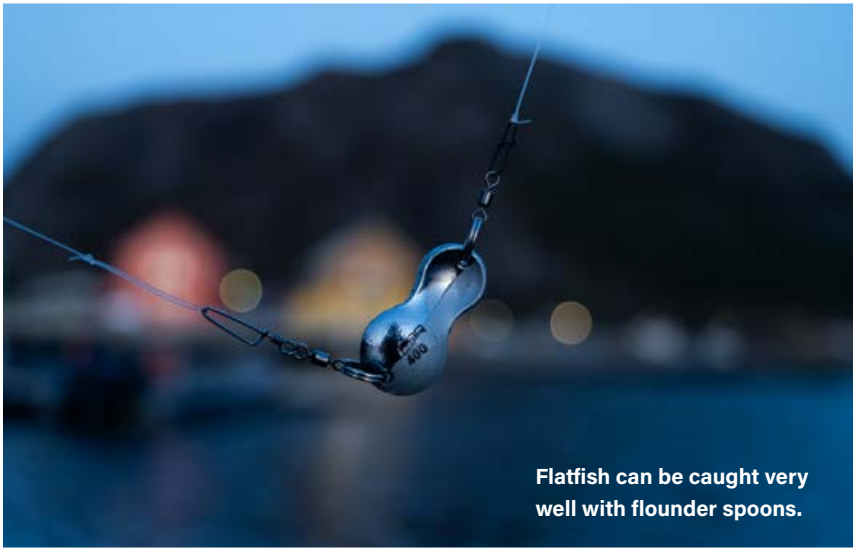
### **COD, COD!**

The first thing I thought of when I knew I was going to Norway was catching cod. I remember that when I was a little boy, my dad and I would go fishing on wrecks in the North Sea on his boat and I would catch beautiful cod with heavy pirks. Here in Lauvsnes, we take a completely different approach. The heavy pirks stay at home. Instead, we use medium-sized

rubber lures that we fish actively. We sail out of the fjord onto the open sea. How cool is that? Joris navigates the boat like a real captain. What a difference from the flat water in the fjord! Out here in the open, the wind and waves have free rein. This is the terrain where I feel more at home. On the chart plotter, we see several under water islands that are interesting. That should be good for cod. Just

like in the fjord, we use the drift bag and let ourselves drift gently over the hotspots between 20 and 60 metres deep. Soon, one cod after another comes up. They are not the monsters we want to catch, but there are plenty of them. Later, we also catch a few real cod in the deeper spots. The trick for us was to let your shad sink to the bottom each time and then slowly reel it in a few metres. Let the bait do its work. Often, the bite comes when the shad sinks again. These bites are often unmissable: a hefty thump on your rod and immediately afterwards the feeling that you are stuck to the bottom. And then you feel the thumping of the cod shaking its head in resistance. What struck me was that the lure with realistic colour combinations and fish imitations did a lot better than the other colours. It's a pity that during our short stay we didn't really have the best of weather. The waves are getting bigger and bigger and have more white heads, so it's time to return to the safety of the fjord. Back at the jetty, we quickly clean the boat and rinse our rods and reels with lukewarm water in our shower to get rid of the salt.





Flatfish can be caught very well with flounder spoons.

We quickly fillet some cod and pollock for dinner and prepare the fishing gear for the next day.

### FLOUNDER SPOONS

Before dinner I go back to the jetty to fish in the harbour for an hour of extra fishing. I attach a flounder spoon to my spinning rod. The rig is simple: a short leader with some beads and a small spinner blade. A little lower, the flounder spoon with a piece of pollock on the hook. I make a long cast and then let it sink

to the bottom. As soon as the flounder spoon hits the bottom, you have to reel in one turn of your reel, but then leave it for about 10 seconds and reel in again one turn. Occasionally give it a good tug and then let it sink again. Flatfish seem to find this very interesting! And believe me, a nice plaice on a 40-gram spinning rod is really spectacular! Time flies and within an hour I catch a number of beautifully marked flatfish on super-light tackle.



Natural bait under a float works incredibly well for large flatfish.

### THE ICING ON THE CAKE!

Today, I have something completely new on the schedule: halibut fishing. I have seen many videos about these powerhouses and the spectacular fights, and today I get to try it for myself. You can catch halibut with artificial bait, but the best way to fish for them is with natural bait. Small coalfish! And we have to catch them first. At a depth of around 15 metres, we see plenty of signals on the depth sounder. Feather mackerel rigs go down and in no time we have enough bait fish to go on our halibut adventure. The day before, Joris and the local guide had marked a few spots where he expects to find halibut. The first spot is a large plateau with 20 metres of water above it. Here we can make long drifts. Once we arrive at the spot, Joris prepares the rods. A large float is attached to the leader. It looks more like a small buoy! Above the float is a clip that can be moved to any depth,

below that a 300-gram fireball jig head is used to lower the baitfish, with a short 100 kilo Kevlar line and a sturdy treble hook attached to it. I quickly bait the hook and let the float drift about thirty metres behind the boat. I secure the rod firmly in the support, loosen the reel's drag and then the waiting begins. In the meantime, we cast forward on the plateau with sandeels and lures. It does not take long and we catch some cod. Then Joris' spinning reel starts to scream, and Joris hooks something bigger than a cod. The spinning rod is struggling, but Joris manages to bring this halibut, about 80 centimetres in size, alongside the boat fairly quickly. The first halibut is a fact. Unfortunately, it didn't come on my rod...

While I'm taking photos, I see the line with the float pulling tight behind Joris, and the float slowly



**The Queen of the North.**

goes down. I put the camera away, grab the rod, close the drag and set the hook. The rod bends heavily. It's hooked! And then it starts. This is why I have come here. A real halibut on my rod. The fish make me move to every corner of the boat, comes

up and dives back down again. The drag is struggling under the power of this halibut. 'Stay on, stay on!' I constantly think, because this is the fish I really want to see. Finally, the monster comes alongside. This one definitely needs to be photographed. Joris and I really have to work hard to bring the halibut on board. But there it is. My very first halibut and, at 1.34 metres, a real one too! Proud as a peacock and with a big smile on my face, I pose for the man with the camera. The fun isn't over yet, because a little later Joris gets his

turn and he also manages to catch a nice similar size halibut on the spinning rod. What a wonderful end to our last day of fishing. Tired but satisfied, I fall asleep on my comfortable bed in our apartment after dinner. Tomorrow we have to get up early and go home, with wonderful memories of a short but fantastic fishing adventure in Lauvsnes in my mind forever. I send a message to my father: 'When are we going to Norway together?'

For more information about this great fishing trip you can check [www.worldsbestfishingtrips.com](http://www.worldsbestfishingtrips.com) or send an e-mail to [mail@worldsbestfishingtrips.com](mailto:mail@worldsbestfishingtrips.com) ■



Joris with a good fish caught on lures.

*Finally, the monster comes alongside. Joris and I really have to work hard to bring the halibut on board. But there it is.*