

Kayaking

Undredal (Aurlandsfjord) – Bakka (Nærøyfjord)

World Heritage Area

Short about the area:

Nærøyfjord, narrow fjord in Aurland municipality, Sogn og Fjordane, ca. 19 km long, cut from the Aurland Fjord, an arm of the Sognefjord, south-west between high and steep mountains (Steganosi in the south 1761 meters above sea level). Just south of Bakka, the fjord is not even 500m wide, and the distance between the peaks of Bakkanosi (1398m) and Vindeggi (1295 m) on each side of the fjord, just 3 km. The river Nærøydalselvi flows down the valley Nærøydalen into the fjord at the village of Gudvangen, near the highway **E16**. The village of Bakka and the Bakka church are located on the west shore of the fjord. More waterfalls in the fjord sides.

Since 2005, the Nærøyfjord has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It has also been rated by the National Geographic Society as the world's number one natural heritage site along with the Geirangerfjord.

More about Nærøyfjord-area here:

<http://naroyfjorden.no/>



Ellen on the fjord at Undredal.

A Norwegian sea-kayaking classic 7-8th August 2010:

Our starting point was Undredal in the Aurlandsfjord. The reasons we chose Undredal as the starting point were several. Main reason was that this direction was best suited to our plan, namely to take at least one, maybe two, trips to the mountains. The paddling distance is not more than about 20 kilometers and can be completed in a few hours, even at a leisurely pace. If you choose to start/end in Gudvangen/Flåm trip is almost twice as long, about 37 km. Before the paddle I drove our car to Bakka and took a taxi back to Undredal.

First stop out Aurlandsfjord we did at Stigen. This farm is in situated more or less in the mountainside. The walk to Stigen is not for people with acute fear of heights. It is possible to continue even longer, all the way to the Kamben at Beitelen. Beitelen is the headland between Aurlandsfjord and Nærøyfjord. On the steepest stretch, from sea to the farm at Stigen, be careful that you do not kick loose stones or anything that can roll out and hit people or animals (goats). The view from Beitelen was definitely worth a couple hours of toil.



View towards Gudvangen from Kamben at Beitelen.

Furthermore, we paddled to Dyrdal in Nærøyfjord. We met several seals fishing in the calm fjord. Close contact with the kayakers, they did not want, and the images turned out rather blurry. The nice weather and meeting with goats, seals, porpoise, screaming raptors (not known what species) and yachts meant that we spent too much time on this stretch. Along with the time-consuming trip to Kamben, resulted in a somewhat to late arrival at Dyrdal. The kayaks we pulled on land just to side of the pier. It is also possible to go ashore on Salthella. Here is a nice beach and this is

perhaps the most commonly used tent place along the route and it may be cramped for space. From Salthella there is a foot-trail to Dyrdal.



Sea-kayaker under dramatic mountains, but on a calm fjord.



Evening mood at our camp at Hjølmo.

Our plan was to walk to Hjøльмо with tent, sleeping bags and what we needed otherwise. It would have been a very late evening for two weary paddlers if not one of the village residents had driven us all the way. We tried to give him some money, but absolutely did not want any payment. On our return the next day we left him a thank you note and some fuel money on his doorstep. At Hjøльмо we found a nice campsite on a small hill on the north side of river. Short distance to water and away from sheep, sheep bells and sheep droppings 😊



Ellen takes a swim in the fjord.

The next day started with a trip from Hjøلمostølen to Vassete. Pasture is located in a quiet, idyllic valley with a small lake, Vassete lake 671 meters above sea level, close by. From the water, towards Vassete, string it out a little river. Vassete is just a half-hour walk from Hjøльмо. You should definitely head to Vassete, and not turn around at Hjøльмо, if you want a walk up this valley.

Having rigged down the tent and packed the other gear, we went down the valley to the pier at Dyrdal. Here it was time for both warm food and a bath in the fjord. The weather was really nice and it was between 18 and 19 degrees in the sea. A nice way to cool down four hot feet after many kilometers downhill walk and about 700 high meters. The remaining paddle leg, from Dyrdal to Bakka, only a few miles, was made in calm, warm weather. The mountains gave great reflections in the fjord. To

get water is no problem in this area. If you want I can just paddle over to a creek and fill it with clear, fresh, cold water straight from the mountains. Still sitting in the kayak!

As mentioned earlier, our car was in place at Bakka. Now we just had to pull the kayaks ashore on the tiny beach close to the boathouses north of the church. The car was parked only twenty meters away.

The trip was over and could hardly have been much better!

Have a nice trip!

Ola

www.fjordimages.com

More images from this trip at:

<http://www.fjordimages.com/Album5/Kayking%20Naeroeyfjord/>

PS: this English text is translated using Google translate. I have tried to fix the worst errors and hope you like this short tour description.

Several companies provide guided kayak tours on the fjord.



Kayaking inwards on Naeroeyfjord.