

KVIKNES HOTEL (4 star) - Balestrand



We have featured the Kviknes Hotel, and enjoyed a close co-operation with the Kvikne Family, since our beginnings - but not since theirs! At Kviknes their beginnings go right back to 1752 and the best traditions of inn-keeping. The Kvikne family, who still own the hotel, started their reign in 1877, a little before our time, and today it is Sigurd Kvikne (4th generation) who heads up the hotel, with his sister Kari managing their reservations and Front Office.

Although the hotel originally started with only two rooms (yes, just two!), today the hotel has 200 guest rooms and is one of the largest tourist hotels in Norway. Graced with an extensive collection of artworks and antiques, the hotel also has a list of prominent guests; Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany was a frequent guest, along with royalty, emperors, presidents, prime ministers, film stars and artists from many countries.

The hotel was originally built in the 'Swiss' style and this section is now referred to as the 'Old Wing' or 'Historical Swiss Style Building'; however much new building, reconstruction and extension has taken place since, not least the addition of the 'New Wing' in the 1960s (see below). The Old Wing directly overlooks the Sognefjord and this is where you will find the beautiful dragon-style restaurant and lounge areas with a small number of guest rooms. In the public rooms you will find a fine collection of paintings from the numerous artists who stayed at the hotel (occasionally using their paintings as a way to pay for their stay!) and antique furniture in keeping with the antique, dragon-style wooden interior.

There are a number of different room categories available at the hotel. Our clients are accommodated in rooms on a high floor in the New Wing of the hotel with a view of the gardens and fjord. These rooms have twin beds, a seating area, desk, TV, telephone and bathroom with bath/shower and WC. A small number of twin rooms are also available in the Old Wing of the hotel which are simply and traditionally furnished in keeping with the old style of the hotel and have a view of the fjord. These rooms are available at a supplement. The Old Wing also has a small number of Junior Suites which have a separated seating area and bedroom and a view of the fjord. Please ask our reservations staff for applicable supplements.

The hotel serves a wonderful, traditional Scandinavian buffet for dinner with a broad selection of cold meats, fish and salad along with a good selection of hot dishes featuring meat, fish and vegetarian options. A large buffet breakfast is also served.

The New Wing – Beauty or the Beast?

It was during the 1960s, when Sigurd and Kari's father, Per Kvikne, was running the hotel that he faced an increased demand for more rooms and plans for a new, modern building were drawn up. At the time Per came under considerable pressure to demolish the old, wooden hotel entirely and completely re-build a modern hotel in its place; however, he couldn't bear to do this (he had an emotional attachment to the hotel and the memories and history it held) and he decided to have two contrasting buildings instead, retaining the old but building a new, and for them to sit alongside one another, both a testament to their place in history and both examples of fine architecture. This decision proved to be very controversial, but it is one that we love and applaud! The New Wing is now seamlessly attached to its older sibling so that internally you pass from one to the other without even knowing you have done so, however, externally the two remain very distinct from one another and still cause something of a visual stir when approaching the hotel from the fjord.

Like it or loathe it, the New Wing is a beautiful example of post-modern 60s architecture and, without it, there simply wouldn't be a historical, wooden building at all!