

# NORWAY

## INSPIRED



Far & Away

How Nordic design concepts translate beautifully to contemporary coastal living.

By Artis Henderson

This may seem far afield from the Gulf coast, but you may be surprised how many design trends from Norway are just perfect for Southwest Florida homes.

Gerry Images/Noralle Ivanova

The twin props whirred and the engines hummed, and inside the plane I watched as Norway's western coastline slid by. I traced our progress on a map I'd spread open on the fold-down table in front of me, marveling at the way the North Sea cut into the land, creating long fingers of water—fjords—that glinted in the afternoon sun. It was mid-summer and

warm by Norwegian standards. The mountain peaks in the Hardangervidda national park, off to the eastern side of the plane, were capped in snow, but the land that edged along the coast was green and verdant. What struck me about the scene below was the ways in which it was similar to our own shoreline—the water that cut into the land, the islets that dotted the

coast, the melding of greens and blues.

It came as no surprise, then, when over the course of my trip I admired elements of Norwegian design and realized that the latest home trends coming out of Norway are just right for Southwest Florida.

Here are a few current Nordic design concepts that would look superb in Florida homes.



**Blue and White Bath Sheets**

BURKELMAN  
\$78  
burkelman.com

**Blue Flat-Weave Kilim Rug**

CHAIRISH  
\$6,900  
chairish.com

**True Blue Triangle Floor Lamp**

CATHRINE RABEN DAVIDSEN  
\$6,500  
thefutureperfect.com

**True Blue Lamp**

CATHRINE RABEN DAVIDSEN  
\$1,700  
thefutureperfect.com

**Norwegian Midcentury Ceramic**

VASE  
\$1,200  
1stdibs.com

**Norwegian Tray Table**

HERMANN BONGARD  
\$1,800  
1stdibs.com

**Bold Blue Accents  
Against Shades of  
White**

Norway is a coastal country whose livelihood, from Vikings to fishermen, traditionally came from the sea. Which explains why touches of blue often make their way into Norwegian homes. With color palettes that favor neutrals, especially white, a bright pop of blue can create a startlingly beautiful design statement.

We may have missed the Vikings in this part of Florida, but we've had our share of buccaneers, and fishing has long been an important part of the local economy. Ocean-inspired accents of blue fit right in here. A white color palette, too, suits the Gulfshore lifestyle, though our version of white paint is inspired by the local beaches rather than acres of snow.

Here are some examples of blue accents that pop in that uniquely Scandinavian way.

Courtesy of Burkelman



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Far & Away

\_01

**Worn Leather**

Of-the-moment Norwegian homes are transitioning away from slick leather pieces in favor of the worn-leather look.

“They’re rustic without looking too antique,” the editors at *Elle Décor* said in an article published earlier this year, “and look great with a sheepskin blanket tossed over their back.”

Sheepskin aside, worn leather is especially right for our relaxed Southwest Florida lifestyle. It conjures images of captain’s quarters on old sailing schooners or book-lined studies where you might sip a glass of rum and enjoy a fine Cuban cigar.

You can incorporate this look into your décor with items like:

- \_01 **Poul Kjaerholm PK31 Three Seat Sofa**  
HIVE  
\$44,045  
hivemodern.com

- \_02 **Overdyed Royal Blue Rug**  
CHAIRISH  
\$3,769  
chairish.com



\_02

Courtesy of Fritz Hansen/Poul Kjaerholm; Courtesy of Chairish/Age John Oriental Rugs



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## Lagom

A Swedish word that means “just right,” the term lagom can just as easily be applied to Norwegian design. Lagom is the Scandinavian concept of balance—not having too much, not having too little. Nordic design favors minimalism and functionality, clean lines and a house free of clutter. Lagom means a stress-free environment that is simple and beautiful and, most importantly, not overwhelmed with stuff.

Life in our little corner of paradise is especially suited to lagom. We need so little for a perfect day here—a pool towel, a beach chair, a tennis racquet if we’re feeling active. Simple tile floors are ideal for sweeping-up sand, and a minimalist interior means we need to dedicate less time on upkeep and can spend more time on the boat. Interior spaces that have been designed with lagom in mind are easy to be in, and they radiate a sense of relaxation and ease. Which suits our coastal living just fine.

When I came home from Norway, I reached out to Michael

Laut, sales design consultant at Scan Design in Fort Myers, to see if my hunch about Norwegian design in Florida homes had any merit. Laut readily agreed.

“Nordic design tends to be very balanced and minimal,” he said, “which reflects southern coastal living.”

He’s seen elements of Scandinavian style in both Naples and Fort Myers—“Minimalistic approaches to design. Not too much but not too little”—and he has easy advice for those looking to incorporate a little touch of Norway into their home concepts.

“Nordic design is all about function, simplicity and beauty,” Laut says. “Keep your space free of clutter, and use neutral colors with pops of color and furniture with modern, clean lines.”

For those who want a touch of Nordic updating without an entire house redo, Laut suggests a single Scandinavian-inspired accent piece. His pick?

“Find a great accent chair with great proportions,” he said. “This



\_01

### Minimalist Coffee Table

CAMILLA ROSEN  
\$1,997  
pamono.com

### \_01 White Hexagon Tile

MERCURY MOSAICS  
\$61 per square foot  
mercurymosaics.com

### \_02 Baloo Chair

FJORDS  
\$2,095  
fjords.no



\_02

Courtesy of Mercury Mosaics; Courtesy of Scan Design/Fjords

will work with any aesthetic.”

Norwegian brands Fjords and IMG, both available at the Scan Design showroom in Fort Myers, deliver on classic Nordic style.

For other ways to incorporate Norwegian design into a Florida home, try investigating some of the hot designers currently coming out of Norway. Oslo-based Andreas Engesvik produces furniture, tableware and other pieces for major international brands like Ligne Roset and Asplund. Kristine Five Melvaer designs lighting, furniture and textile objects for the international market. And ceramicist Victoria Gunzler has been featured in *The New York Times*.

Of course, for the best design inspiration, nothing beats a trip to Norway itself. Book a visit during the summer months when the lush mountains and blue coastline are at their most vibrant—and when a break from Southwest Florida’s summer heat will make Norway’s cool landscape all the more inviting. Be sure to pack a notebook for jotting down design inspiration.



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**\_01 Mia Drum Pendant**  
ARTERIORS  
\$1,015  
perigold.com

**\_02 True Blue Lamp**  
THE FUTURE PERFECT  
\$2,125  
thefutureperfect.com



\_02

### Whimsical Lighting

For lighting inspiration, Norway has turned to Asia in recent years, adapting traditional paper lanterns and giving them a Scandinavian twist. These lights take many forms—hanging pendants, vertical columns, table-top globes—that give off a warm, diffuse glow. The lantern-inspired designs lend themselves well to the Danish concept of hygge, or cozy comfort, that has been the recent design rage.

In Southwest Florida, this style of lighting translates to delicate pieces that can lift a design landscape. Here, we traditionally avoid heaviness—woolens, dark colors, overwrought furniture—in favor of a lighter island style using linens, rattan, pastels. Norwegian-inspired lighting gives interiors a breezy, sophisticated vibe without devolving into kitsch.

So go ahead and shed a little light-hearted light on the subject. ✂

Courtesy of Perigold/Arteriors; Courtesy of The Future Perfect/True Blue/Cecille Bach



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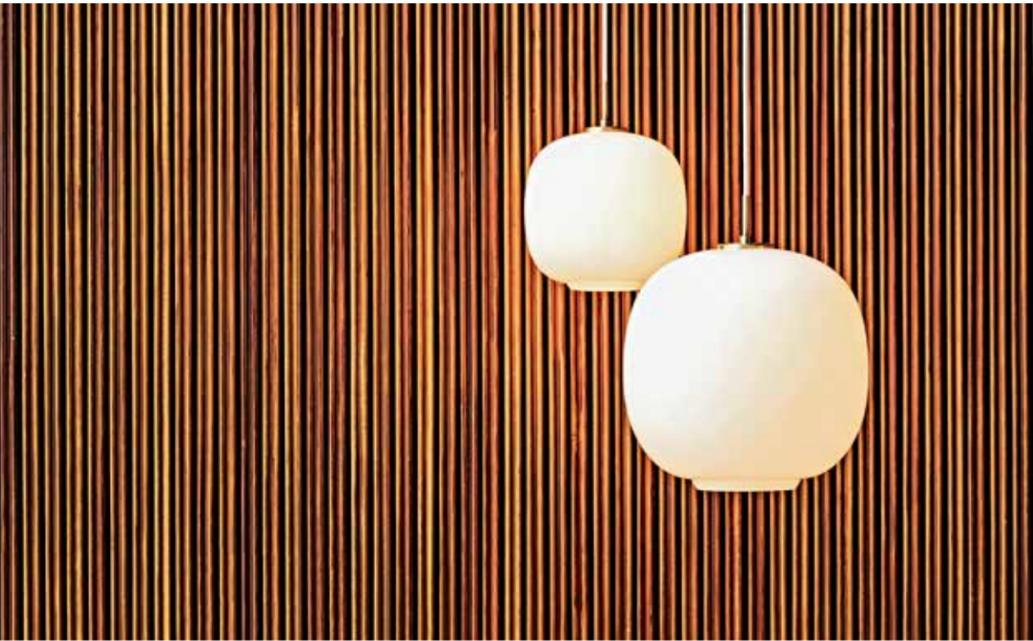
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Courtesy of Two Enlighten/Louis Poulsen; Courtesy Home/David Trubridge



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**\_02 Kina Pendant**  
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