

BETWEEN CULTURE AND NATURE IN SOUTH FINLAND

Between dramatic coastal landscapes, historic towns and stunning National Parks southern Finland is an ideal holiday location. Visit the Finnish capital and immerse yourself in the heart of this countries interesting history by taking the coastal road to the west. Discover a rich cultural heritage illustrated by churches, castles and fortresses. Enjoy saunas and wild swimming in the Great Lakes region. This trip includes typical lakeside cottage accommodation so you can enjoy the highlights of Finnish life.

 Region	Southern Finland
 Activity	Discovery Self-guided Summer
 Duration	8 days
 Code	IND03
 Price	From €840
 Level	2/5
 Comfort	4/5

ITINERARY

Day 1 Welcome to Finland



Arrival at Helsinki airport where a rental car is waiting for you. Spend the evening at leisure exploring Helsinki.

Helsinki, also called the Baltic daughter by Finnish people, is surrounded by nature and rocked by the breeze of the Gulf of Finland. It is a dynamic city, clean, with impressive architecture and lots of vegetation.

Accommodation: Hotel in city-center

Day 2 Helsinki / Ekenäs/ Hanko / Mathildedal



Today, we suggest driving along the Kings road to Hanko: This road was formerly used by kings and merchants who were travelling between Norway and Russia. Traces of Finland's history are evident along this route, a country located at the crossroads between the East and West. Make a detour to Ekenäs to go walking in the old town, here you will also have the opportunity to admire the archipelago of 1,300 islands that surrounds the city. The peninsula is lovely, from here you can enjoy the Finnish coast. Late afternoon arrival in Mathildedal where you will stay for the next two nights.

Accommodation: B&B

Transport: 125 miles (200km)

Day 3 Teijo National park



A day to explore the area surrounding your accommodation, do not hesitate to rent a motor boat, a fishing rod or a bike! It is possible to organise boat trips to the islands for today. Mathildedal is at the edge of Teijo National Park, we recommend hiking along the paths coloured by wild berries and mushrooms.

Accommodation: B&B

Day 4 Turku, former Finnish capital



Take the road through Halikko bay which immerses you in that unique Norwegian fjord atmosphere. Discover the surrounding area of Turku and enjoy the bird life of its 20000 islands. Maybe you will see guillemots, eiders, terns and gulls nesting in the area... You can take the 'road of the archipelago' tour (155miles/250 km) through the islands where people speak Swedish and Finnish. This archipelago has been inhabited for centuries by fishermen, lighthouse keepers and sailors, there were even once smugglers! Discover beautiful natural landscapes and rocky islets covered with shrubs and lichens. Observe postal ships, water taxis and shuttles which cruise through the waters bring food and other supplies. You

can rent kayaks to fully explore this beautiful place and there are many museums worth visiting - in particular those in ancient sailboats.

Accommodation: Villa in the area

Transport: 90miles (145 kms)

📍 Day 5 **The heart of the wilderness**



Before heading inland we recommend stopping at the small port of Naantali for a stroll in this charming old city. You can walk along the coastline up to Rauma and its ancient city which is now a UNESCO heritage site. Today's scenic drive passes Finnish parks with forests, lakes, rivers and serenity. Traditional saunas are also part of this magic scenery...

Accommodation: Cabins

Transport: 185 miles (300 kms)

📍 Day 6 **Like a local**



Wish to try the Finnish art of living? Rent fishing equipment, enjoy the tranquility of the Finnish lakes and catch a pike or two before taking to the sauna. There are two stunning National Parks within close proximity to you today: Helvetinjärvi and Seitsemäinen - both well worth a visit!

📍 Day 7 **Tampere**



After a nice break in the forest, drive to Tampere, a city full of surprises. Then, take the road to the south to Akaa for a final stop in a charming B & B

Accommodation: B&B

Transport: 70 miles (115 kms)

📍 Day 8 **Flight back home**



Drive to Helsinki airport, return your rental car and catch your flight

Transport: 85 miles (140 kms)

This itinerary, including walking distances and times, is indicative and fully flexible.

Other trips you may like



Crossing Northern Finland: An 11 day self-drive trip for those who love open spaces, tranquility and authenticity. Enjoy exciting adventures every day coupled with plenty of time to relax... from hot saunas to wild swimming in lakes under the midnight sun,...



Highlands and Highlights of Iceland: How would you like to go whale-watching and explore lava fields, waterfalls and mountains? Bathe in nature baths and warm rivers, go hiking in the famous multi-coloured mountains of Landmannalaugar and discover Reykjaviks iconic landmarks and museums - this trip has it all...

PERIOD & BUDGET

When to travel?

The best period for travelling is during the following months:



Price

For two people: from €675

The budget is an indication of the price per person, subject to availability. Your local agent will send you a customized quote with the exact price. The price can vary according to availability, level of services, period of travel, number of participants, booking time frame and other items.

Included

- Accommodation: a range of luxury options including traditional cabins, luxury villas and hotels
- Breakfasts
- Car hire with CDW insurance and unlimited mileage
- Our detailed guide to the regions specified in the itinerary

Not included

- Flights
- Lunches and dinners

Additional Options

- Reindeer farm visit €30-€40
- Museum visits: from €9
- Various optional activities to be confirmed at time of booking

Notes

Comfort: 4/5 Comfortable

Well-equipped accommodation options like basic hotels or charming guesthouses are rated 4/5 for comfort. Please note that depending on the destination this does not necessarily guarantee private bathroom and kitchen facilities. This trip uses various accommodation options including hotels, cabins and villas.

Level: 2/5 Moderate

This is your adventure, you can choose how strenuous or how relaxing each day is. Please note that our difficulty ratings may vary depending on the weather. You should have a sense of adventure and a positive attitude.

A valid drivers license is needed to hire and drive a car.

Insurance

Car hire: Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) insurance is included in our prices.

Additional Options & Accessories:

- An additional driver
- Super Collision Damage Waiver Insurance (SCDW)
- Sand and Ash Damage Waiver Insurance (SADW)
- Gravel Protection Insurance (GP)
- The GP, SADW & SCDW insurance package
- 4G Wifi
- A child car seat, various sizes and options available:
- A booster seat, compulsory for children up to 150cm

It is good to know that normally, CDW & SCDW insurance does not cover damage to tyres, windshields, headlight optics or the vehicle's

underbody. Similarly, any damage, including damage to the engine, from gravel or excessive speed is not covered by this insurance. Any damage caused to the vehicle from driving in places where passage is forbidden will not be covered by insurance. Optional accessories like car seats or 4G should be reserved in advance. Please contact us if you have any questions or require more information.

Travel insurance: Not included

PRACTICAL INFO

Staff

Armed with an abundance of experience and a wealth of knowledge our professional team know Finland inside out. We are here to ensure you have the best possible trip so ask us anything, we love sharing our local knowledge! Please be aware that this is a non-guided, self-drive trip.

Food

Food is not included, you will be able to purchase food at our hotel restaurant, local stores and other cafes... Our detailed guide which accompanies this trip includes lots of recommendations. Breakfasts are included with most accommodation options.

Transportation

This trip includes car hire.

Budget & exchange

The currency in Finland is the euro. Please budget for the following:

- Food, personal expenses and drinks
- Any additional activities/supplements
- Petrol

Material

We prefer that you do not wear any cotton clothing, including underwear, when participating in activities. When cotton gets wet from water or sweat it ceases to insulate and it does not dry fast. The best materials for outdoor activities are fast drying materials like polyester or materials which are warm when wet like wool. The most powerful materials against the wind and rain are 'breathable' materials like Gore-Tex or Nikwax.

Our advice for keeping warm

Winter in Finland can be very cold, please think carefully about what clothes you bring, although we will provide warm outer layers, the layers you wear next to your skin make the biggest difference. We recommend:

- No cotton
- Bring dry spares of everything, including underwear and gloves
- Wear multiple layers including:
 1. A warm breathable base layer
 2. A second thermal layer
 3. Wind and waterproof protective out layer (we provide a quality jacket and over trousers for activities)

Helpful equipment

We recommend packing:

- Sturdy hiking boots
- Sunglasses and suncream
- Swim stuff for saunas and water activities
- A wind/waterproof jacket with hood

You may also consider packing:

- A camera (and suitable protective case)
- Wetwipes
- Blister plasters
- Plastic bags for wet/dirty clothing

Luggage

You may bring a hold bag (up to 20kg) as well as a cabin bag.

For you hold luggage please bring a soft bag like a ruckack rather than a hard cased suitcase because it is more practical. We also recommend that you pack your clothes in plastic bags inside your rucksack so that they stay dry in the event of bad weather.

Do not forget to bring a small rucksack to use as a day bag (25/30L). You can bring this as hand luggage on the plane. You will carry your lunch, water, spare layers and any personal medication with you each day in this bag.

Passport

You will need a passport that is valid for at least three months after your return date.

Visa

UK passport holders do not require a VISA to visit Finland which part of the Schengen cooperation.

The [Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland](#) lists the accepted travel documents and visa requirements for every country.

Mandatory vaccines

There are no specific health risks

Weather

Between early June and early August, temperatures reach +20°C (+68°F) in the day and sometimes even +30°C (+86°F) (37°C (98.6°F) in Joensuu in July 2010!).

The summer is relatively warm but also very bright - Finland enjoys long sunny days. In the far north, the sun does not set from mid-May to the end of July. In the center and the south, the summer sun shines for 18 to 20 hours.

The temperature of the lake water is between 18 - 24°C, the waters are shallow and warm up quickly with the long sunny days and the good Finnish summer temperatures. The midnight sun is visible in summer in Lapland and in the regions above the Arctic Circle.

Electricity

Finland uses the standard Europlug socket with two round prongs (50Hz/230 volts)

Local time

Finland uses Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)+2 and observes Daylight Saving Time making it GMT+3 during the summer months

Topography

Area:+130502 square miles (+338,000 km²) which consists of around 10% water, 69% forest and only 8% cultivated land

Size: It is the seventh largest country in Europe,+720 miles (1160km) North to South and +335 miles (540km) East to West

Borders: Sweden, Norway, Russia and the coast

There are said to be 187888 lakes here in Finland and 179584 islands including a concentration of islands off the South West coast which forms the largest archipelago in Europe.

Sustainable tourism

As adventure and wilderness travel experts who run trips to some of the most remote parts of the world, we take responsible tourism very seriously.

Here in Finland we work in partnership with Metsähallitus to protect Finnish waters and forests - an exclusive agreement which enables us to use the roads of Hossa National Park. Our kennel is cleaned daily and subject to regular veterinary and we work with MyClimate to offset all carbon emissions produced by snowmobiling activities and transfers.

We respect the 'Leave No Trace' outdoor ethical code and try to explore this beautiful location whilst causing minimal

environmental damage.

The Leave No Trace policy can be summarized in 7 simple steps which we hope you will follow during our trip...

1. Be prepared
2. Stick to trails and camp overnight right
3. Stash your trash and pick up waste
4. Leave it as you find it
5. Be careful with fire
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors

Over the years we have built up good relations with our local suppliers and we are keen to support local businesses as much as possible. We are a small company and we pay our local partners and suppliers directly insuring fair rates. Our small group sizes not only provide a more intimate adventure but also cause less impact on the environment and local communities.

We expect all who travel with us to support and uphold our Sustainable Tourism philosophies.