



# Helsinki

09 / POP 1.09 MILLION TOTAL URBAN AREA

## Includes ➔

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Olo (p62)
- ➔ Savoy (p62)
- ➔ Demo (p62)
- ➔ Kuu (p63)
- ➔ Hietalahden Kauppahalli (p64)

## Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Hotel Fabian (p58)
- ➔ Hotel Haven (p58)
- ➔ Hotelli Helka (p57)
- ➔ Klaus K (p58)
- ➔ Hotel Katajanokka (p60)

## Why Go?

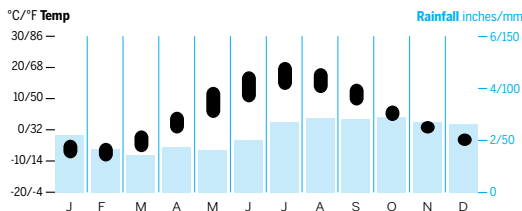
It's fitting that harbourside Helsinki, capital of a country with such watery geography, melds so graciously into the Baltic. Half the city seems liquid, and the writhings of the complex coastline include any number of bays, inlets and islands.

Though Helsinki can seem a younger sibling to other Scandinavian capitals, it's the one that went to art school, scorns pop music and works in a cutting-edge studio. The design scene here is legendary, whether you're browsing showroom brands or taking the backstreet hipster trail. The city's gourmet side is also flourishing, with new gastro eateries offering locally sourced tasting menus popping up at dizzying speed.

Nevertheless, much of what is lovable in Helsinki is older. Its understated yet glorious art-nouveau buildings, the spacious elegance of its centenarian cafes, dozens of museums carefully preserving Finnish heritage, restaurants that have changed neither menu nor furnishings since the 1930s: all part of the city's quirky charm.

## When to Go

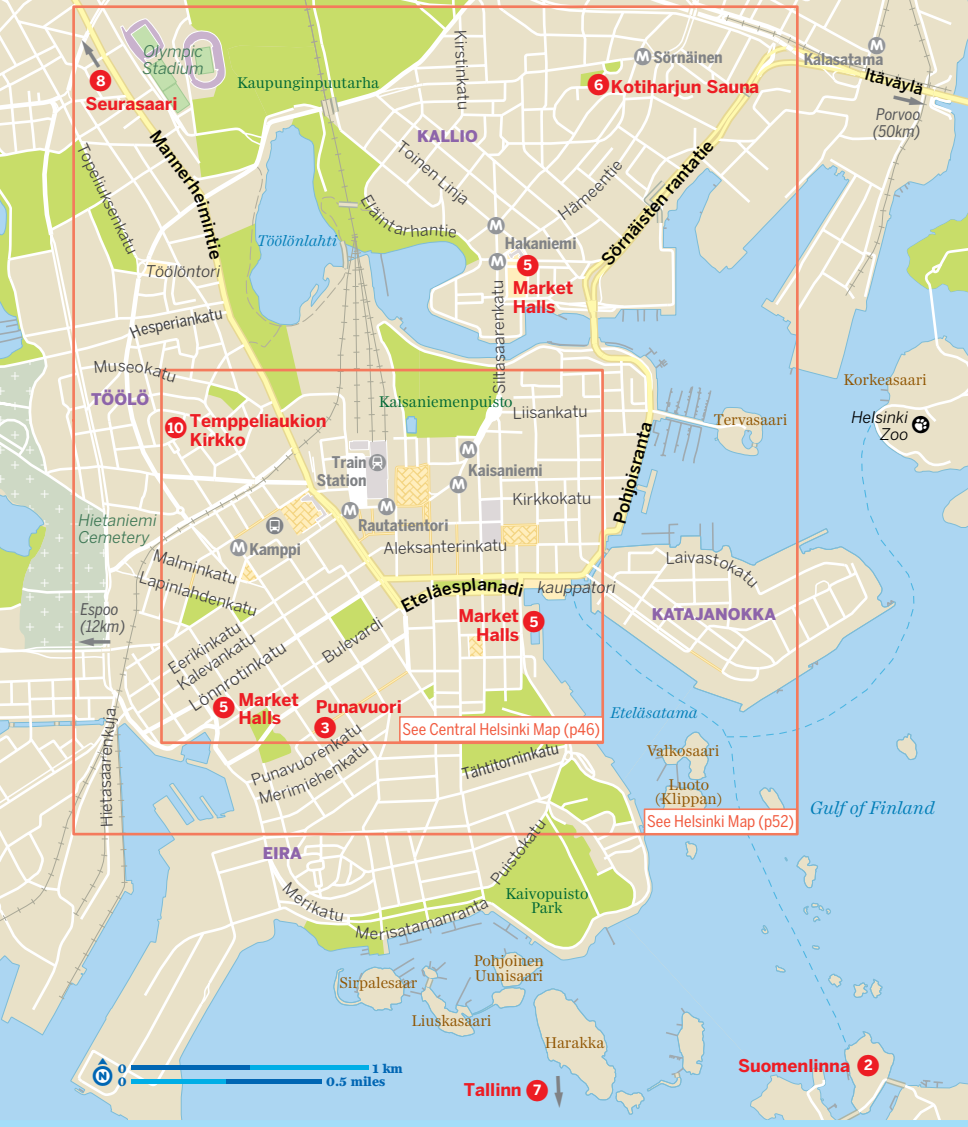
### Helsinki



**Jun** Terraces are sprouting outside every cafe and the nights never seem to end.

**Aug** The city is functioning again after the July lull, but all of the summer activities are still on.

**Dec** Ice skate and absorb the Christmassy atmosphere before temperatures get too extreme.



## Helsinki Highlights

- 1 Descending into the weekend maelstrom of Helsinki's excellent variety of **pubs and bars** (p65)
- 2 Grabbing a picnic and exploring the fortress island of **Suomenlinna** (p44) that guarded Helsinki harbour
- 3 Browsing the design district of **Punavuori** (p68)
- 4 Selecting from the huge range of **museums** (p50) and **galleries** (p49)
- 5 Buying fresh produce in **market halls** (p64)
- 6 Sweating in atmospheric **Kotiharjun Sauna** (p55)
- 7 Tripping across to **Tallinn** to admire its Old Town (p56)
- 8 Strolling among traditional wooden buildings on **Seurasaari** (p53)
- 9 **Dining** (p62) on avant-garde forage-based tasting menus or traditional food such as meatballs or liver
- 10 Absorbing the atmosphere inside **Tempeliaukion Kirkko** (p50)