



Finland

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Best Places to Eat

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- ➔ Smor (p354)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Hotel F6 (p349)
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Why Go?

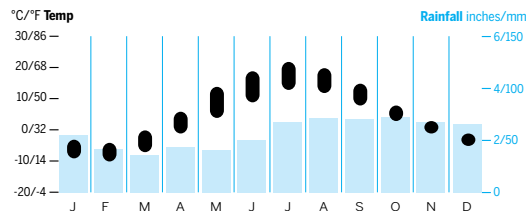
Inspired design, technology and epicurean scenes meet epic stretches of wilderness here in Europe's deep north, where summer's endless light balances winter's eerie frozen magic.

Whatever the season, there's something pure in the Finnish air and spirit that's vital and exciting. With towering forests, speckled by picture-perfect lakes, Suomi offers some of Europe's best hiking, kayaking and canoeing. After the snowfall, pursuits include skiing, sledding with dogs or reindeer, snowmobiling or trekking across snowy solitudes, lit by a beautiful, pale winter sun. And of course, there's catching the majestic aurora borealis (Northern Lights).

Vibrant cities stock the south, headlined by the capital, Helsinki, a cutting-edge urban space with world-renowned design and music scenes where 'new Suomi' cuisine is flourishing, bringing locally foraged flavours to the fore. Beyond Helsinki, Tampere and Turku are especially engaging, with spirited university-student populations.

When to Go

Helsinki



Mar–Apr There's still plenty of snow, but enough daylight to enjoy winter sports.

Jul Everlasting daylight, countless festivals and summer budget accommodation.

Sep The stunning *ruska* (autumn colours) season make this prime hiking time up north.



Finland Highlights

1 Helsinki (p348)

Exploring Finland's harbourside capital, a creative melting pot for the latest in Finnish food, drink, design and nightlife.

2 Savonlinna (p357)

Marvelling at the shimmering lakescape of picturesque Savonlinna, and catching top-quality opera in its medieval castle.

3 Kuopio (p359)

Cruising Lakeland waterways, dining on tiny lake fish, and sweating in the huge, sociable smoke sauna.

4 Rovaniemi (p360)

Crossing the Arctic Circle, hitting the awesome Arktikum museum, and visiting Santa in his grotto.

5 Inari (p361)

Learning about Sámi culture, husky-sledding and meeting reindeer in this northern Lapland village.