

Visit Karelia

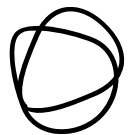
North Karelia

The Soul of Finland

Business case

Welcome to North Karelia

- North Karelia is part of Europe's largest lake district and Finland's easternmost county. It is home to 4 national parks and Finland's most loved view - Koli national park. You will also find one of the two UNESCO's Biosphere Reserves in Finland in North Karelia.
- Getting to North Karelia in Finnish Lakeland is easy with well-connected flight routes from Europe to Helsinki and a short 1 hour domestic flight to Joensuu. A scenic rail journey from Helsinki is also a good option and takes just 4,5 hrs.



Lakeland
The Heart of Finland





Being Minimalist Was Never in Our Nature

They say every season has its colour. But in North Karelia, four simply aren't enough – we need four thousand. Have you ever tried counting the fiery hues of autumn or the shifting, wave-like colours of the Northern Lights?

What about the golden rays of the midnight sun, each casting a unique shade of warmth? Or the sparkling, ever-changing surface of the Great Lakes? Here, nature paints a masterpiece beyond imagination.

This is Where The Story Begins

North Karelia is more than just a tale – it's a collection of stories, both ancient and new. It is the birthplace of the Finns, the land where the timeless story of our nation began.

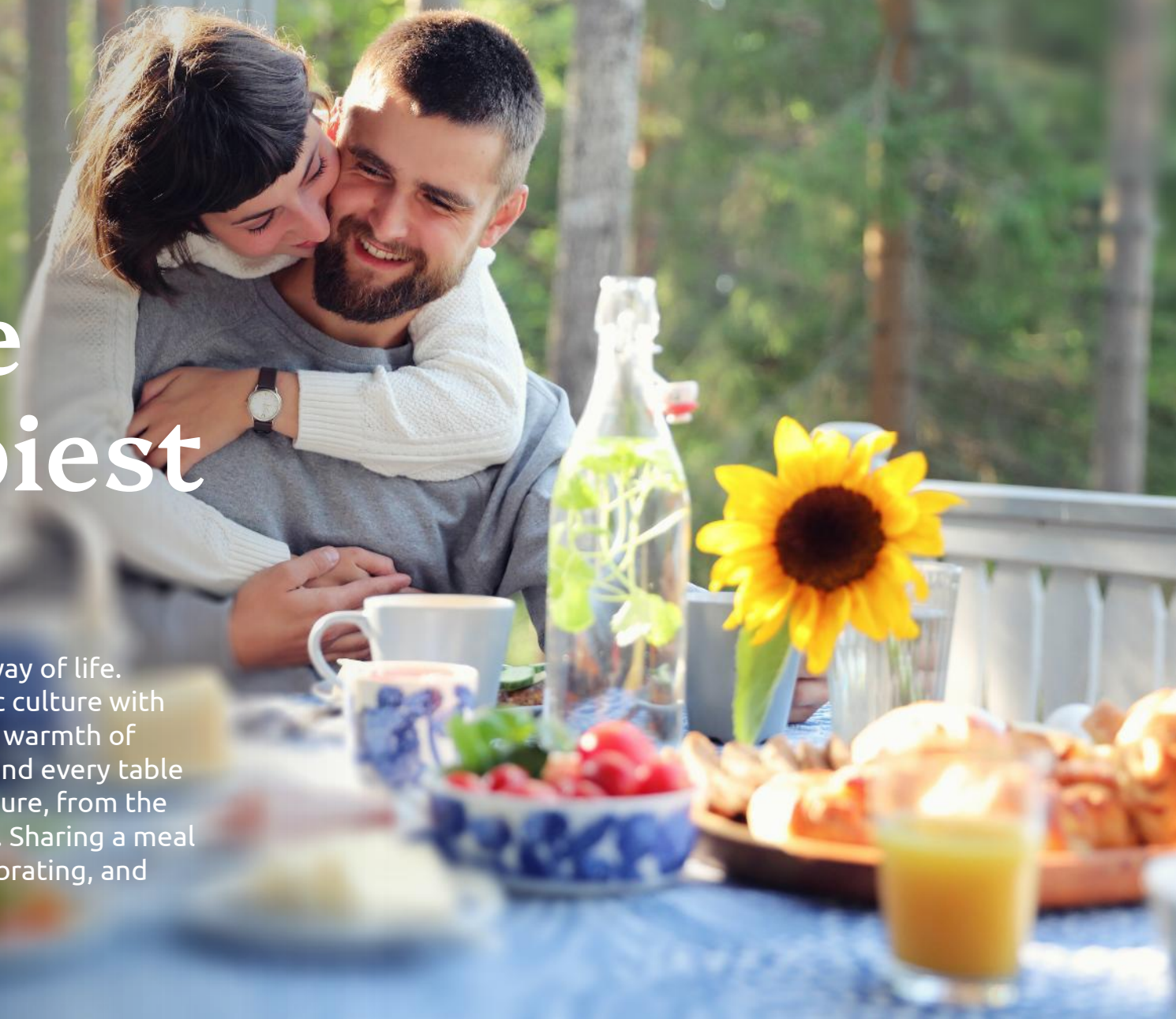
You can hear these stories echoing in the rugged frontiers and resonating in the strings of the kantele. They thunder beneath your feet and beat within the steadfast heart of the bedrock. They sing through the voices of strong Karelian women and guide your steps along the paths once traveled by ancient storytellers.

Here, every moment becomes part of the story. Come and discover it for yourself.



Meet the Friendliest People Of The World's Happiest Country

In North Karelia, hospitality is not just a gesture, but a way of life. Whether you're exploring Karelian heritage or authentic culture with locals, or tasting generations-old recipes, you'll feel the warmth of Karelian hospitality. Here every welcome is heartfelt – and every table filled with tradition. Food is at the heart of Karelian culture, from the iconic karjalanpiirakka (Karelian pastries) to tasty stews. Sharing a meal here isn't just about eating – it's about connecting, celebrating, and savoring the flavors of the region.



Disconnect To Reconnect In North Karelia

Do you feel how time slows down, and the world feels a little quieter? In North Karelia you'll leave behind the distractions of modern life and rediscover what truly matters. Immerse yourself in an authentic Karelian experience – whether it's the stillness of a lakeside cottage, swimming in the great lakes or enjoying the untouched beauty of the wilderness.



Nothing Quite Like a Karelian Kind

In North Karelia, it's the kind people who leave the biggest impression. Warm, welcoming, and wonderfully original, Karelians have a spirit all their own. We'll greet you with kindness, share stories as rich as our landscapes, and invite you to experience traditions that have stood the test of time. Come meet the people of North Karelia – because there's truly nothing quite like a Karelian kind!



Places of interest



1 Koli National Park
The most iconic landscape of Finland.



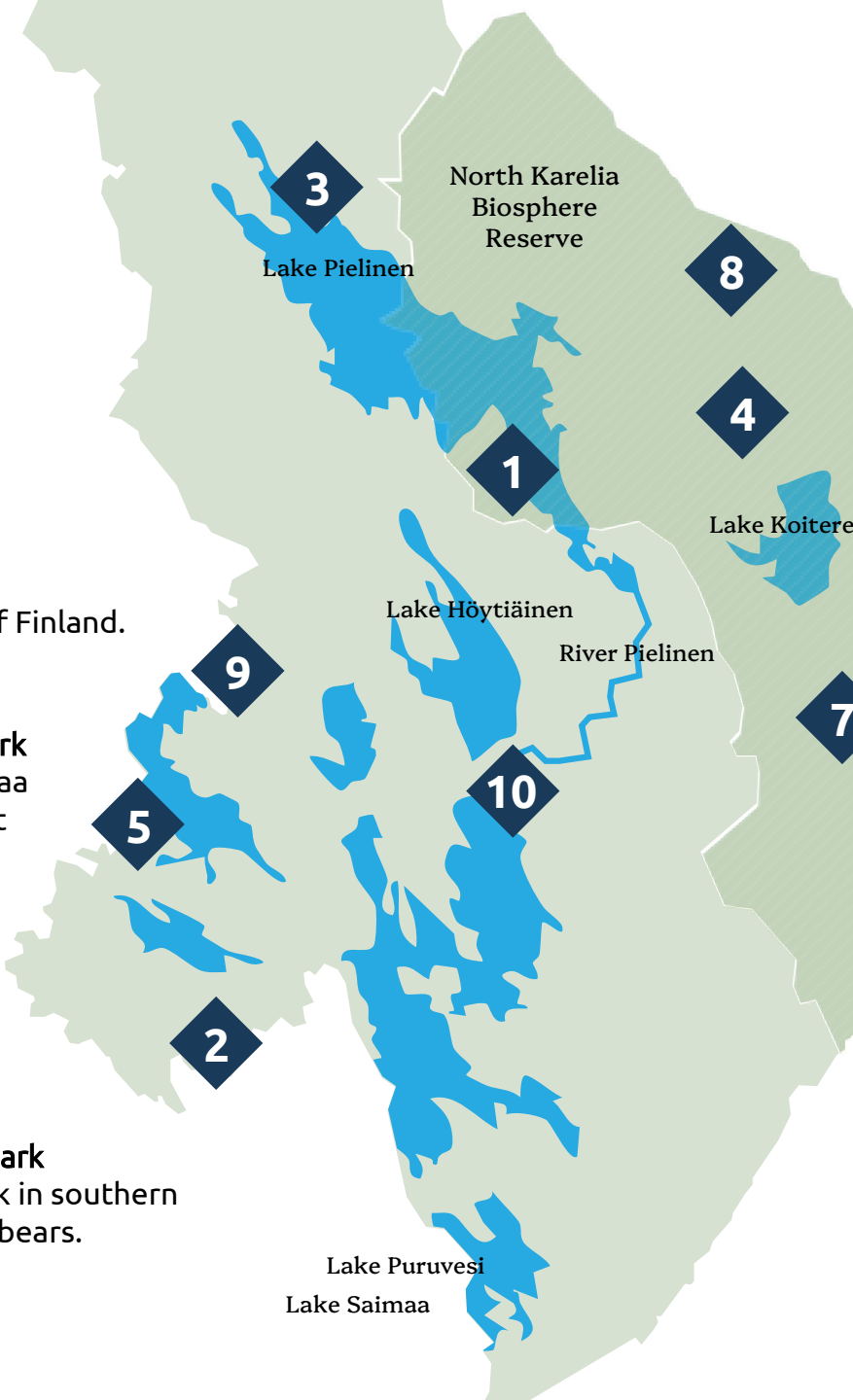
2 Kolovesi National Park
Habitat of rare Saimaa ringed seal & ancient rock paintings.



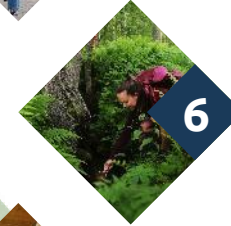
3 Bomba, the Karelian Village
Authentic Karelian architecture.



4 Patvinsuo National Park
Largest national park in southern Finland & habitat of bears.



5 Valamo and Lintula
Iconic Orthodox monasteries.



6 Petkeljärvi National Park
Rare ice age ridges and WW2 battle locations.



7 Parppeinvaara Rune Singer's Village
Traditional Karelian hilltop village with museum and a restaurant.



8 Ruunaa rapids
The best white water rafting location in Finland.



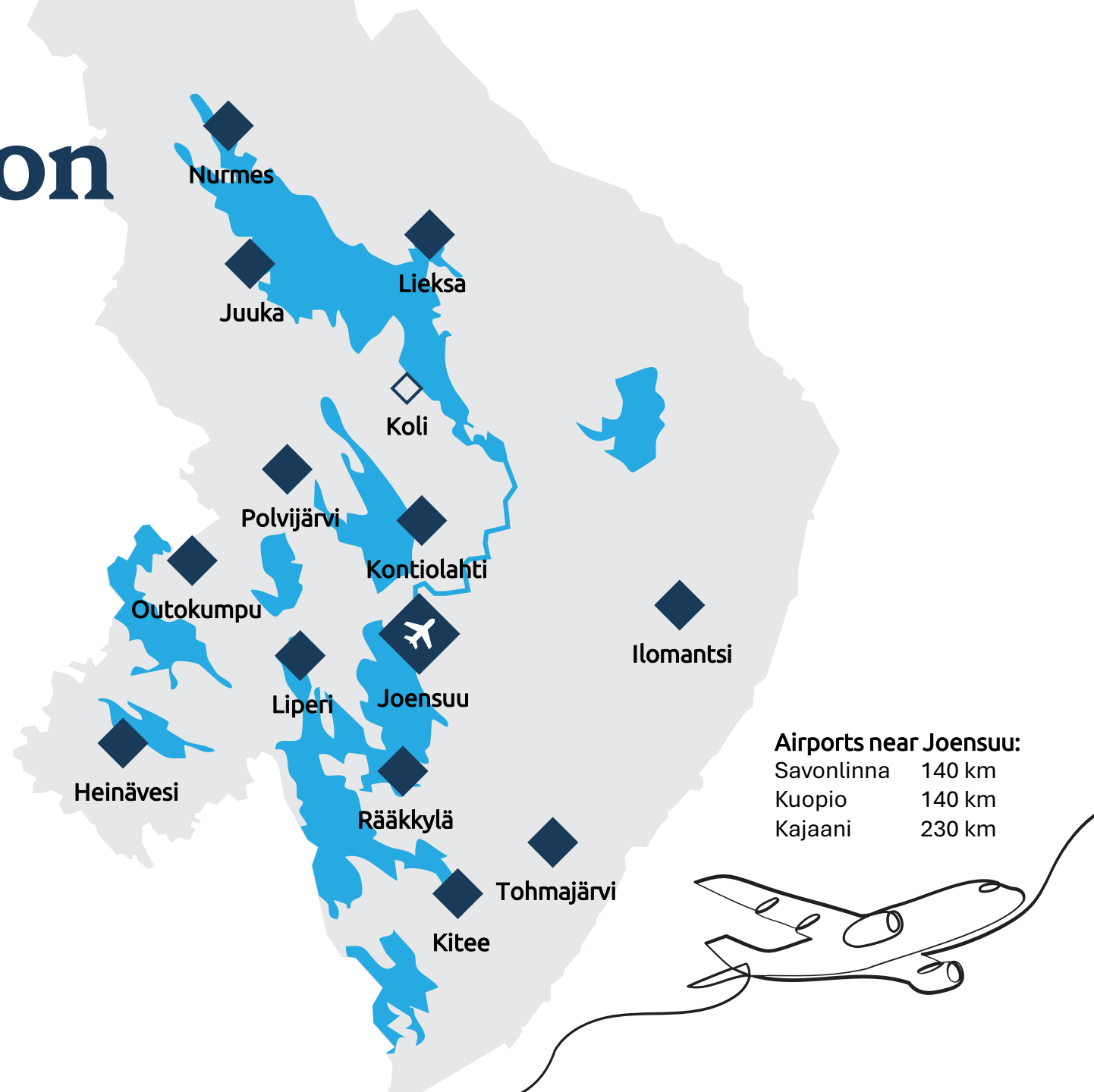
9 Outokumpu Old Mine
One of a kind unique and historic mining museum.



10 Kontiolahti Biathlon Stadium
Biathlon World Cup.

Accommodation capacity

Joensuu 1960 <small>Original Sokos Hotel Kimmel, Boutique Hotel Lietsu</small>	Lieksa 1212 <small>Break Sokos Hotel Koli, Break Sokos Hotel Koli Kylä, Tarina-aho</small>	Kontiolahti 472 <small>Venejoen Piilo, Sampon Mökit</small>
Nurmes 1286 <small>Break Sokos Bomba, Hyvärilä, Guesthouse Pihlajapuu, Laitalan Lomat</small>	Liperi 230 <small>Ollilan Tupa, Leveälähti Cottages</small>	Kitee 820 <small>Ruoke Holiday Village, Karjalan Helmi</small>
Outokumpu 40 <small>Kyykerin Kartano</small>	Ilomantsi 350 <small>Guesthouses Mantan Majatalo, Mõhkõn Rajakartano, Kuuksenkaari</small>	Heinävesi 222 <small>Valamo Monastery, Police jail cell</small>
Juuka 90 <small>Koli Freetime</small>	Polvijärvi 92 <small>Saarila Farm Accommodation</small>	Tohmajärvi 159 <small>Villa Valkea, Itärajan helmi</small>
Rääkkylä 118 <small>Villa Ruusula, Koivuniemi Camping, Paksuniemi, Karelia Cottages</small>	7000 Total amount of beds	



Beds in registered accommodation (more than 20 beds): **6253**
 Beds in unregistered accommodation (less than 20 beds): **798**

Key figures of North Karelia

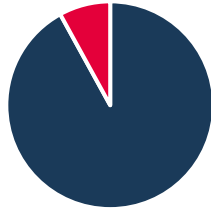


532,000
overnights in 2024



**Our key
source markets**
DACH, Benelux
UK, France, Spain and Italy

2,7 nights
Average stay of
International Client (2021)



Source market
92 % domestic
8 % international

109 €

**Average room rate per
room per night in 2024**
(vs Lapland 160 € per room per night)



7000
total bed capacity

TOP 10

International Markets
Germany, Sweden, Poland
France, Estonia, The Netherlands
Lithuania, Austria, Switzerland, Italy

32,5 M €
**Accommodation
Income in 2024**

53% of Europeans stay
between **May-Sep**

8

Reasons to visit North Karelia

Experience
snowfilled
winter in Koli &
Bomba

Taste and learn
to make local
delicacies

Stay in unique
accommodation

Experience local
Karelian culture

Hike from
monastery to
monastery or in
national parks

Live like a local
and enjoy sauna &
'mökki' by a lake

Cruise through
the Great Lakes of
North Karelia

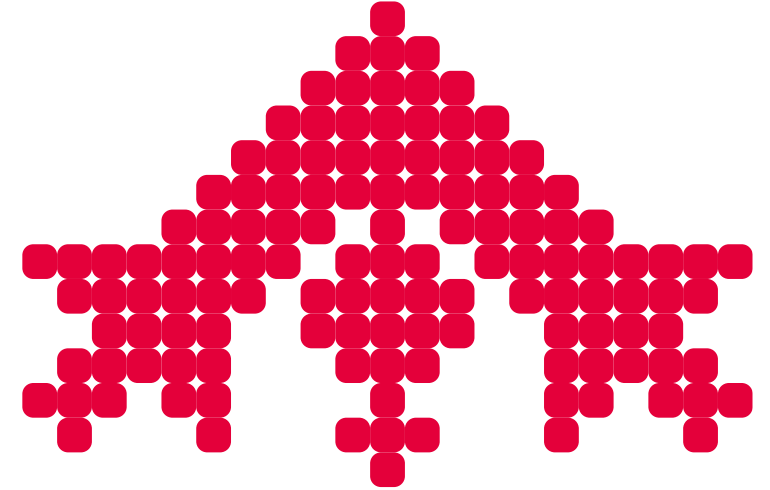
Join one of our
many events





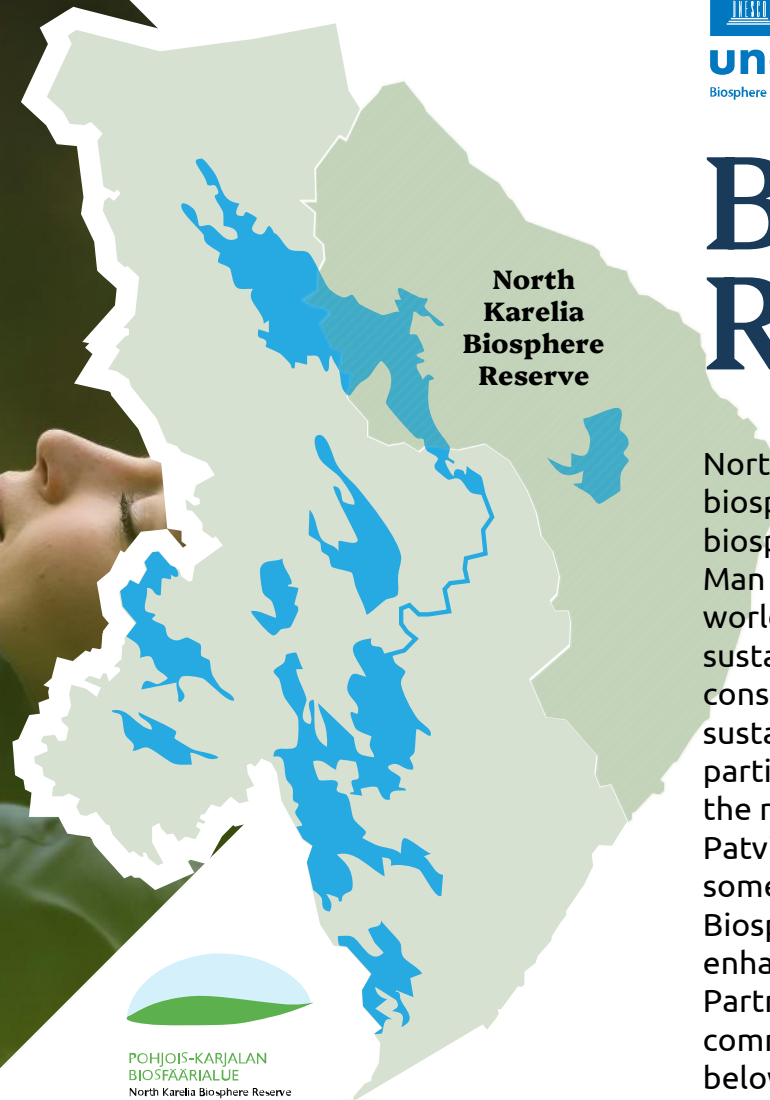
Recognitions & partners we work with

- Koli – Outdoor travel destination of the year 2023 (Scandinavian Outdoor Group)
- Break Sokos Hotel Bomba – best hotel in Finland 2024 (Finnish Travel Gala)
- Korvenkota smoke sauna – best sauna in Finland 2024 (influencer award)
- Äksyt Ämmät foodie tour - best food tourism product 2015 (Hungry for Finland competition)
- Koli - destination of the year 2021 (Association of Finnish Travel Industry)
- Koli - domestic destination of the year 2024 (MeNaiset, Finland's largest women's weekly magazine)
- North Karelia UNESCO biosphere reserve since 1992



Sustainability

Responsibility and sustainable development are key themes in Finland's tourism strategy and one of the key goals. In North Karelia, tourism relies on strongly sustainable manners principles. Many of our companies have achieved Sustainable Travel Finland certificate or are on their way to achieve one. You will find STF certified companies marked with Sustainable Travel Finland label in our product manual.



Biosphere Reserve

North Karelia is home to one of the two UNESCO designated biosphere reserves in Finland. Established in 1992, it is the first biosphere area in Finland to be acknowledged in UNESCO's the Man and the Biosphere programme of 749 (2024) biospheres worldwide. Biosphere reserves are learning sites for sustainable development, whose mission is to promote the conservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage, as well as the sustainable development of livelihoods through the active participation of local communities. Great places to experience the nature of North Karelia Biosphere Reserve include Koli, Patvinsuo and Petkeljärvi National Parks; Ruunaa Hiking area or some of the nature reserves, like Koivusuo or Kesonsuo. Biosphere sustainable development partnership network enhances opportunities for regional sustainable development. Partners set their own sustainable development goals and commit to them. You will find biosphere partners marked with below logo in this manual.

Joensuu airport



Population of North Karelia: 162,000

Operation: year round

Flight time from Helsinki: 50 mins
(distance by ground: 440 km)

Technical details

- Two runways sized 2,500 m x 52 m each (28 ILS approach)
- Good availability for slots

Maintenance

- Winter maintenance equipment available for the entire winter season (plow sweeper blowers, snow blowers, spreaders). De-icing available.
- 24 hour fuel availability (JET A-1 and Avgas 100LL)

Ground handler: Joen Service Oy.

Joensuu is uniquely positioned in the heart of North Karelia allowing easy access to all its destinations

Distances from Joensuu airport:

Lieksa:	1 hr 15 mins
Koli:	1 hr
Nurmes & Bomba:	1 hr 40 mins
Ilomantsi:	1 hr
Kitee:	1 hr 11 mins
Heinävesi:	1 hr 10 mins
Rääkkylä:	50 mins
Juuka:	1 hr 10 mins
Outokumpu:	45 mins
Tohmajärvi:	45 mins
Kontiolahti:	25 mins
Liperi:	25 mins
Polvijärvi:	40 mins

Distance to Joensuu city centre 12 km

We're Here to help you

We at North Karelia's destination marketing organisation VisitKarelia are here to help you as a travel trade with all things North Karelian. Whether you are searching for the best attractions, pre-planned routes or hidden highlights, our team can help you find a suitable solution to your customers.

If you need help with product development, supplier contacts or marketing material, do not hesitate to get in touch. We also organise joint marketing campaigns and organise fam trips. Come and experience the Soul of Finland in Finnish Lakeland!

Contact us at

- visitkarelia@businessjoensuu.fi
- or by telephone: +358 010 419 8016



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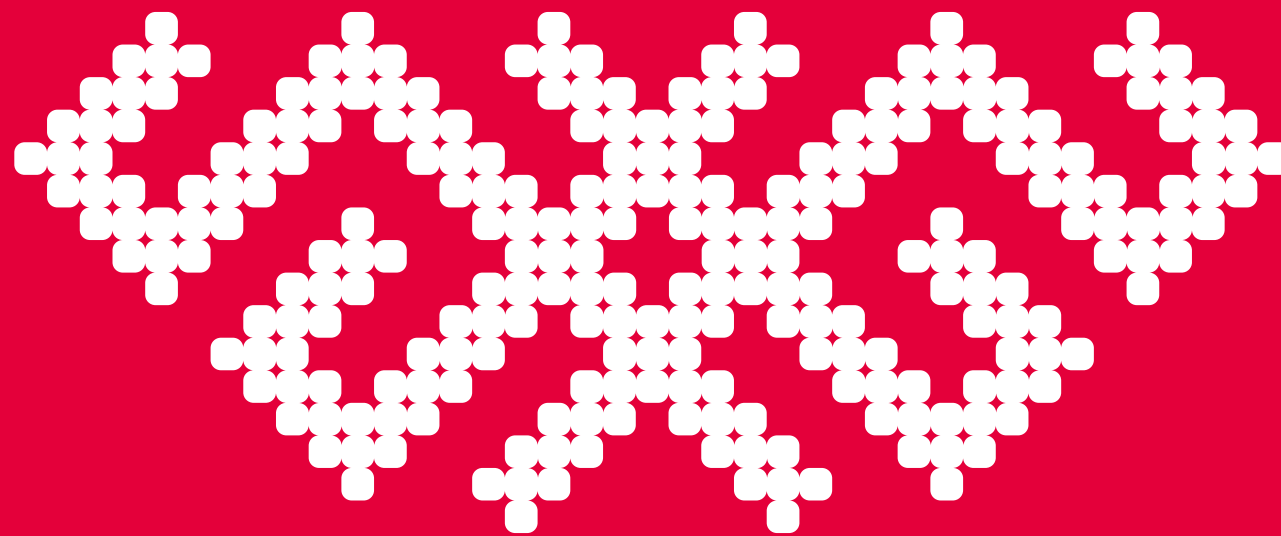
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