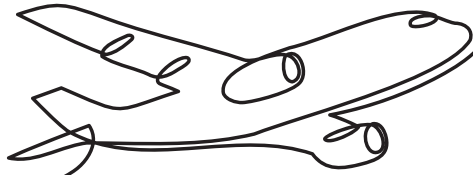




visit Karelia

# Product Manual

FOR THE TRAVEL TRADE 2025-2026



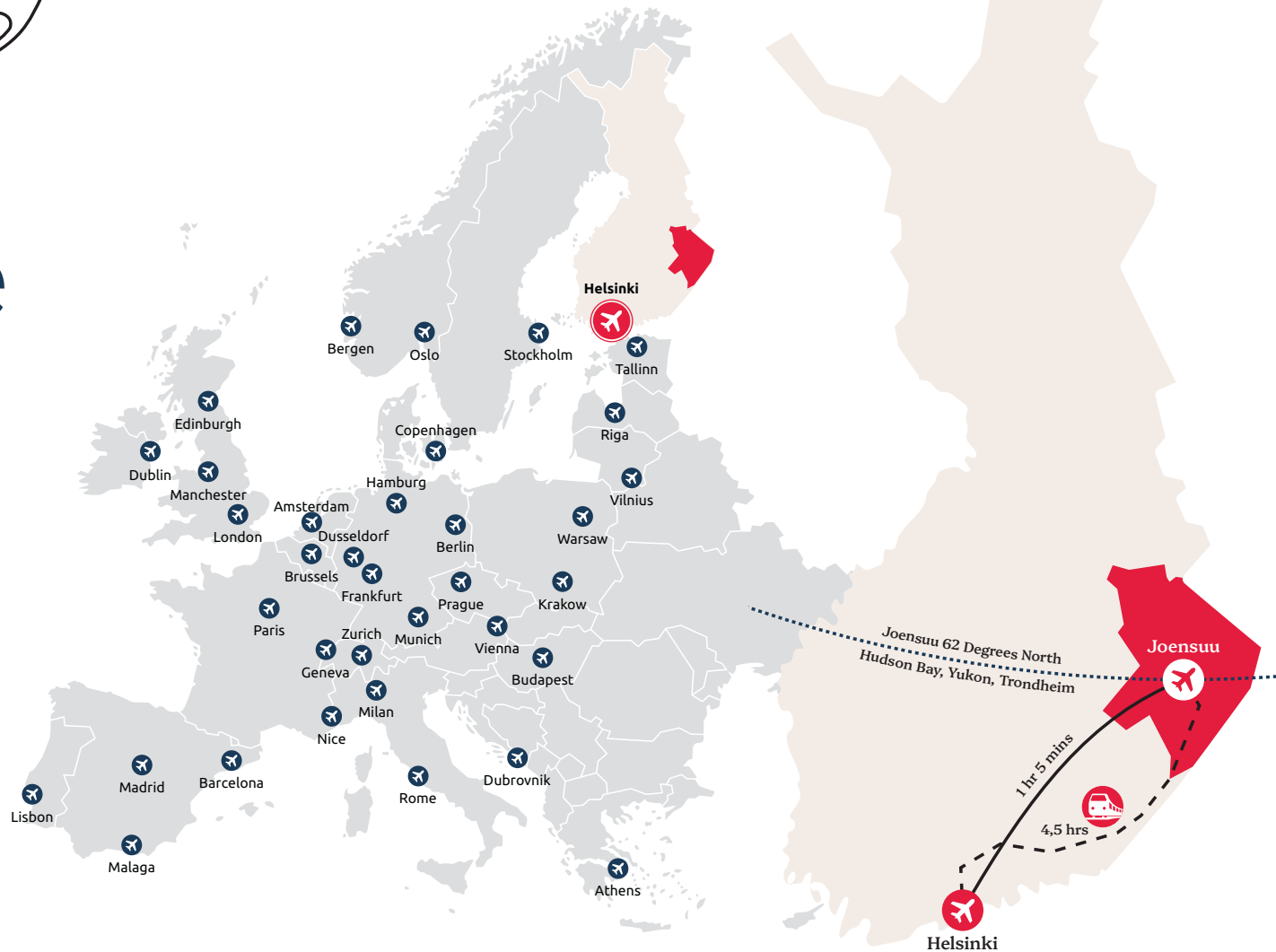
# Welcome to North Karelia

We are delighted to introduce you our first ever product manual for travel trade showcasing a selection of best North Karelian products and events.

Located in Finnish Lakeland, in North Karelia you can 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. This land, the birthplace of the Finns, is steeped in history and tradition. Hospitality here is a way of life, with warm welcomes and traditional meals like karjalanpiirakka.

Come and experience North Karelia, the Soul of Finland!

VisitKarelia team





# 8

## reasons to visit North Karelia



Experience  
snowfilled winter  
in Koli & Bomba  
(pages 6-7)



Stay in unique  
accommodation  
(pages 10-11)



Experience local  
Karelian culture  
(pages 7, 9, 11, 13-19)



Hike from monastery to  
monastery or in  
national parks  
(pages 14-15)



Taste and learn  
to make local  
delicacies  
(pages 12-13)



Live like a local  
and enjoy sauna &  
'mökki' by a lake  
(pages 16-17)



Cruise through the  
Great Lakes of  
North Karelia  
(pages 8-9)



Join one of our  
many events  
(pages 18-19)



# North Karelia

## *The Soul 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!







# *Magical* Winter Holiday

KOLI & BOMBA

**Snowy  
winter break**



**Karelian  
culture**



**Karelian dinner  
and pastry  
workshop**



# MAGICAL WINTER HOLIDAY AT KOLI & BOMBA

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 Arrival in Joensuu Airport and private transfer to Koli.

Upon arrival at Joensuu Airport, guests are privately transferred to Koli. Guests check in at Break Sokos Hotel Koli for 2 nights, located in the scenic Koli National Park. The hotel offers stunning views of Lake Pielinen and a relaxing atmosphere. A 3-course dinner and evening sauna are included.

### Day 2 Koli & optional activities

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before a leisurely day exploring Koli's famous national landscape. Optional activities include a snowshoe safari or a scenic winter walk. A soup lunch is provided at the hotel, and the afternoon is free for more activities. End the day with a 3-course dinner and an evening sauna at the hotel.

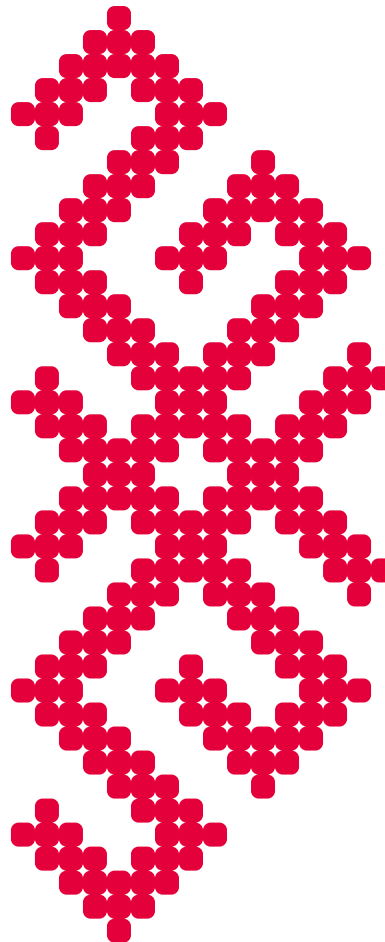
### Day 3 Bomba & Karelian pastry workshop

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to Nurmes for a Karelian pie workshop at Bomba House, where you'll make traditional pies with rye crusts and various fillings. Enjoy a soup lunch with your homemade pastries. Check in for a two-night stay at Break Sokos Hotel Bomba, offering beautiful lake views. In the afternoon, choose between tobogganing or a cross-country skiing lesson. A three-course dinner is included at the hotel.

### Day 4 Guided tour of Bomba House & Karelian dinner

After breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a guided tour of the Bomba House and the Karelian village, learning about its history and cultural significance. A soup lunch is included. The afternoon is free for optional activities. In the evening, savour a Karelian-style buffet at the Bomba House, featuring traditional dishes like Karelian stew and pies, along with a variety of salads, main courses, and desserts.

### Day 5 Farewell. After breakfast, transfer back to Joensuu airport for your onward journey



**Duration:** 5 days / 4 nights  
**Validity:** January-March 2025 and 2026

**Minimum pax amount:** 15 pax

#### Inclusions:

4 nights accommodation at Break Sokos Hotel Koli and Break Sokos Hotel Bomba on twin share basis including full board inc. Karelian themed dinner, Karelian pie workshop, one activity in Bomba, guided tour of the Bomba House and private transfers airport-Koli-Bomba-airport

#### From price (net per person on twin share):

583 € pp in a twin

**Arrival point:** Joensuu airport

#### Transfer times:

Joensuu-Koli 1 hr , Koli-Bomba 1 hr

& Bomba-Joensuu 1 hr 40 mins

#### Contact details for booking:

sales.karelia@sokoshotels.fi

#### Optional activities

- **Snowshoe safari in Koli** from 59 €/person/1 hour inc. winter gear set
- **Wintery scenic walk on the tops of Koli** from 22 € per person
- **Visit Nature Centre Ukko** from 6€ per person
- **Koli Relax Spa** from 36 € per person
- **Downhill skiing at Koli ski** from 40€ per person per day (excluding equipment)
- **Cross country ski school at Koli Ski** from 50 €/1h/person
- **Upgraded dinner in Valamo monastery at Bomba House** from 92,50 € per person
- **Upgraded dinner in Bomba: dinner by a fire** from 38 € per person
- **Altai skis in Bomba** from 59 €/person/1 hour inc. winter gear set
- **Bomba Snowmobile safari** 129 €/person/2 hours
- **Visit Bomba Spa** from 17 € per person



SOKOS HOTELS



**Recognitions & awards:**  
Bomba: The hotel of the year award 2024, Finnish Travel Gala





New product

# North Karelia cruise

JOENSUU, KOLI, BOMBA, ILOMANTSI

Nightless Night  
and authentic  
nature



Cruise through  
the Great Lakes of  
North Karelia



Karelian  
culture and  
cuisine





# SUMMER WONDERS OF NORTH KARELIA CRUISE

## ITINERARY

**Day 1 Joensuu:**  
Arrival to Joensuu by evening flight or train, transfer to the Original Sokos Hotel Kimmel for dinner and overnight.

**Day 2 Sailing to Koli: a scenic voyage on River Pielinen**

Join us for an unforgettable voyage through North Karelia! The journey begins from the northern shores of Lake Saimaa, in Joensuu harbour on m/s Sinivuokko. Enjoy the ever changing scenery as you sail along tranquil River Pielinen, through locks towards Lake Pielinen and the famous national landscape of Koli national park. During full day cruise, you'll enjoy Karelian hospitality onboard and enjoy a welcome drink, lunch and afternoon coffee. The cruise arrives to Koli at around 5pm, after which you transfer to Break Sokos Hotel Koli for dinner and overnight. Located at the top of Koli, you are only a few hundred meters away from one of the best loved views of Finland.



POHJOLAN MATKA

**Day 3 Discovering Bomba: Karelian Culture, Cuisine, and Relaxation**

After breakfast, return back to the ship and continue northwards on Lake Pielinen towards Bomba. You'll enjoy lunch onboard and arrive to Bomba mid-afternoon. On arrival, you'll enjoy a guided tour of Bomba's Karelian village and enjoy a Karelian themed dinner at Bomba House. The evening is free to relax at Break Sokos Bomba's luxurious spa, which is inspired by Karelian myths and has got several different saunas.

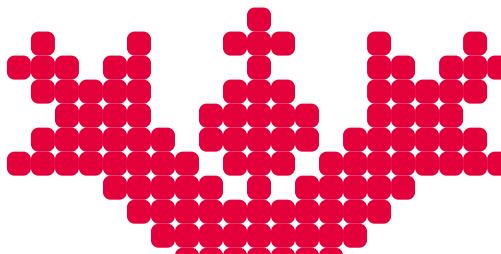
**Day 4 Exploring Koli: Scenic Views, Nature Tours, and Local Stories**

After breakfast, you set sail towards Koli, after enjoying lunch, coffee and entertainment onboard. On arrival you'll join in for guided nature tour of Koli. The views over Lake Pielinen have attracted many Finnish artists, photographers and nature-lovers over the centuries. The landscape tour will take you to the highest viewpoints of the National Park: Ukko-, Akka- and Paha-Koli whilst local guide tells you stories about the history, nature and culture of the area and leads you to enjoy the surrounding nature (easy hiking). Enjoy dinner at Break Sokos Hotel Koli's panoramic restaurant overlooking Lake Pielinen. Overnight at the hotel.

**Day 5 Cultural and Historical Journey: Exploring Parppeinvaara and Möhkö**

After breakfast, the tour continues to the east to the village of the poems Parppeinvaara and Möhkö by coach. The poetry village of Parppeinvaara invites you to get to know the rich spectrum of Karelian culture. Spend a moment in the charm of the poetry village, listening to kantele music and the guide's stories, and get to know the diverse exhibition offer. From Parppeinvaara, the journey continues to Finland's easternmost village, Möhkö. You can get to know Möhkö's iron history under the guidance of Möhkö Ruukki's guide. The activities of Rautaruukki, the military history of the area and the forested times of Möhkö village become familiar. Lunch and coffee is included during excursion. After the tour, return to Joensuu by coach for the final dinner and overnight at Original Sokos Hotel Kimmel.

**Day 6 After breakfast, transfer to Joensuu airport or continue onwards by rail.**



**Duration:** 6 days / 5 nights  
**Validity:**  
22. Jun – 27. Jun 2025 & other dates Jun-Sep on request for min. of 20 passengers  
**Minimum pax amount:** 20 pax  
**Inclusions:**  
5 night accommodation on BB basis, all transfers, 3 x day cruises with lunches and coffees onboard, 4 x dinners and 1 x Karelian themed dinner, all excursions and guiding as described.  
**From price (net per person on twin share):**  
Min 20 pax 1298 € pp in a twin  
Min 40 pax 1230 € pp in a twin  
Min 50 pax 1215 € pp in a twin  
**Arrival point:** Joensuu airport or train station  
**Transfer times:**  
Joensuu airport-Joensuu city centre 15 mins,  
Joensuu train station-city centre 5 mins.  
**Contact details for booking:**  
incoming@pohjolanmatka.fi

### Optional activities

- On request: guided nature tours, canoeing, swimming, cycling on e-bikes, Koli relax spa.



**Recognitions & awards:**  
Bomba: The hotel of the year award 2024, Finnish Travel Gala



New product

# *North Karelian* Adventure self drive

KONTIOLAHTI, KOLI, NURMES,  
LIEKSA, ILOMANTSI, TOHMAJÄRVI

Nature



Culture



Saunas





# NORTH KARELIAN ADVENTURE SELF DRIVE

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 Arrival in Joensuu

Upon arrival to Joensuu airport or train station and pick up a rental car (additional cost). Drive to Kontiolahti where you'll stay in a unique accommodation Venejoen Piilo; a little forest hideaway.

### Day 2 Koli National Park: A Lakeside Retreat at Korvenkota

Head towards Koli national park, where you'll stay the next night. Your accommodation is booked in a lakeside kota, a wooden hut with a fireplace. Korvenkota offers a quintessential North Karelian experience with a smoke sauna and lakeside location. During your day in Koli, we recommend a visit to the top for the most loved view of the national park or perhaps you could explore Devil's Church - a 34 meter long cave, only 500 meters from Korvenkota.

### Day 3 Exploring Nurmes and Bomba: A Journey into Karelian Culture

From Koli, your journey continues to Nurmes, home of the colourful wooden quarter and Bomba, where you can experience authentic Karelian culture at the Bomba House and the Karelian village. Tonight you will stay in a charming guesthouse.

### Day 4 Rafting Adventure at Ruunaa: Exploring one of the best white waters of Finland

Today you continue to east of Lake Pielinen and the famous rafting area of Ruunaa. Ruunaa offers white water rafting in Neitikoski and you can choose to join a more relaxing rafting experience in a wooden boat or a more adventurous option with inflatable dinghy. Accommodation in a cottage.

### Day 5 Discovering Ilomantsi: Culture, History, and Scenic Views

Today your journey continues to Ilomantsi, known for its annual bear festival and war history tours. Ilomantsi is a real mix of East and the West and Finland's most Orthodox area. While here, make sure you visit Hermann wine tower for magnificent views and a taste of local berry wines and Parpeinpirtti, one of the best preserved Karelian buildings. Your accommodation is at Möhkön Majakartano, a charming guesthouse in Möhkön village, the easternmost village in Finland.



ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT DMC

### Day 6 A Tranquil Retreat in Tohmajärvi: Traditional Farmhouse Stay by the Lake

You'll continue to Tohmajärvi and Itärajan Helmi, a traditional farmhouse accommodation by a lake. A stay here takes you back in time and you can disconnect from modern life. Choose to spend the night in an accommodation granary or glamping tent.

### Day 7 Return back to Joensuu or continue south to explore Finnish Lakeland further.

#### Duration:

7 days / 6 nights

#### Validity:

Jun-Sep 2025 and 2026

#### Minimum pax amount:

2 pax

#### Inclusions:

6 nights accommodation (inc. Bed linen and final cleaning in Ruunaa), towels and sauna, daily breakfasts and 5 dinners. Car hire is available at extra cost.

#### From price (gross per person on twin share):

1300 € pp in a twin

#### Arrival point:

Joensuu airport or train station

#### Transfer times:

Joensuu airport-Venejoen Piilo 45 km;

Itärajan Helmi-Joensuu 75 km

#### Contact details for booking:

sales@aksytammat.fi

#### Optional activities

- **Guided hiking tour to top of Koli**  
from 200 € per group 1-10 person
- **Wildlife observation evening in Lieksa**  
from 169 € per person
- **Fishing trip in Lake Höytiäinen, Kontiolahti**  
from 599 € per boat
- **Canoeing on a lake or river in Nurmes**  
from 40 € per person
- **Boat trip on Lake Pielinen in Nurmes**  
from 60 € per person



#### Recognitions & awards:

Korvenkota smoke sauna  
- the best sauna in Finland 2024





# Karelian food workshop

*small group escorted tour*

NURMES

Experience  
unique North  
Karelian cuisine

Enjoy soft  
adventures in  
North Karelian  
nature

Escorted  
foodie tour





# KARELIAN FOOD WORKSHOP

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 A Taste of Tradition: Rye Bread Workshop at Guesthouse Pihlajapuu

Upon arrival at Guesthouse Pihlajapuu, guests are welcomed with a dinner. The workshop begins with making the rye sourdough starter. Finnish rye bread, or ruisleipä, is a symbol of Finland's culinary heritage, known for its unique taste, texture, and cultural significance.

### Day 2 Traditional Finnish Culinary and Cultural Experience Day

After breakfast, guests learn to bake rye bread. In the afternoon, they participate in a beverage workshop to learn how to make traditional Finnish rye malt beer, kalja, and other drinks like Louhisaari's drink and a rowan tree leaf beverage. The day ends with a short walking tour of 6-12 km, depending on the weather and guests' preferences.



ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT DMC

### Day 3 Sweet Pastry Workshop and Finnish Outdoor Traditions

Today guests take part in sweet pastries workshop baking buns and cakes, including the traditional Finnish sweet cardamom bun, pulla, which is a staple of Finnish coffee breaks. In the afternoon, they bake thin seed crisps and various buns. The day concludes with canoeing followed by a sauna session.

### Day 4 Exploring Nurmes: Wooden Architecture and Local Delights

The tour visits town of Nurmes today, which is famous for its wooden quarter and colourful wooden houses. Enjoy a coffee break at a local bakery cafe.

### Day 5 Mastering Karelian Pastries: A Culinary Journey into Tradition

Today's workshop is the highlight of the tour when guests learn to bake North Karelia's best known delicacy: the Karelian pastry. It has EU's traditional speciality guarantee (TSG) since 2003 and is a truly Karelian dish, that has spread across Finland. Karelia is also home to other kinds of pastry and guests explore pastries like vatruska, sultsina, supikas, and pyörö in the afternoon.

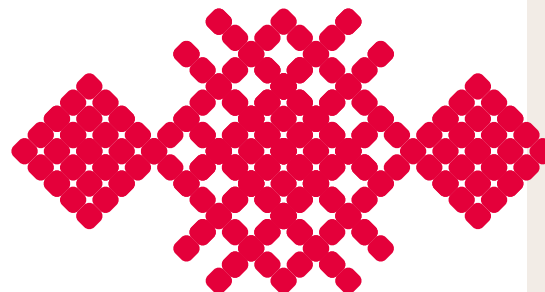
### Day 6 Seasonal Preserves and Flavors: Marmalades, Jams, and More

Today is a Marmalade and Jam Day and guests can also prepare herb pesto, black currant leaf beverages, and various chutneys and relishes, depending on the season.

### Day 7 Nature and Tradition: Hiking, Smoke Sauna, and Campfire Farewell

Guests enjoy a hiking tour in the Raesärkät nature preserve, grilling Finnish sausages by the campfire. In the evening, they experience a traditional smoke sauna and campfire dinner before the tour concludes.

### Day 8 Return to the airport



**Duration:**  
8 days / 7 nights

**Validity:**

Guaranteed departures in 2025:

- 3-10 May
- 10-17 May
- 4-11 Oct
- 11-18 Oct

For 2026, similar dates will be available, please contact Äksyt Ämmät for exact dates.

**Minimum pax amount:**

2 pax (tour operates with min of 4 pax)

**Inclusions:**

7 nights accommodation on twin share with full board in a guesthouse, all food workshops, guided hiking tours and all transportation from/to KUO airport.

**From price (gross per person on twin share):**

1750 € pp in a twin

**Arrival point:**

Joensuu or Kuopio

**Transfer times:**

Joensuu airport-Nurmes 1 hr 40 mins,

Kuopio airport-Nurmes 1 hr 30 mins.

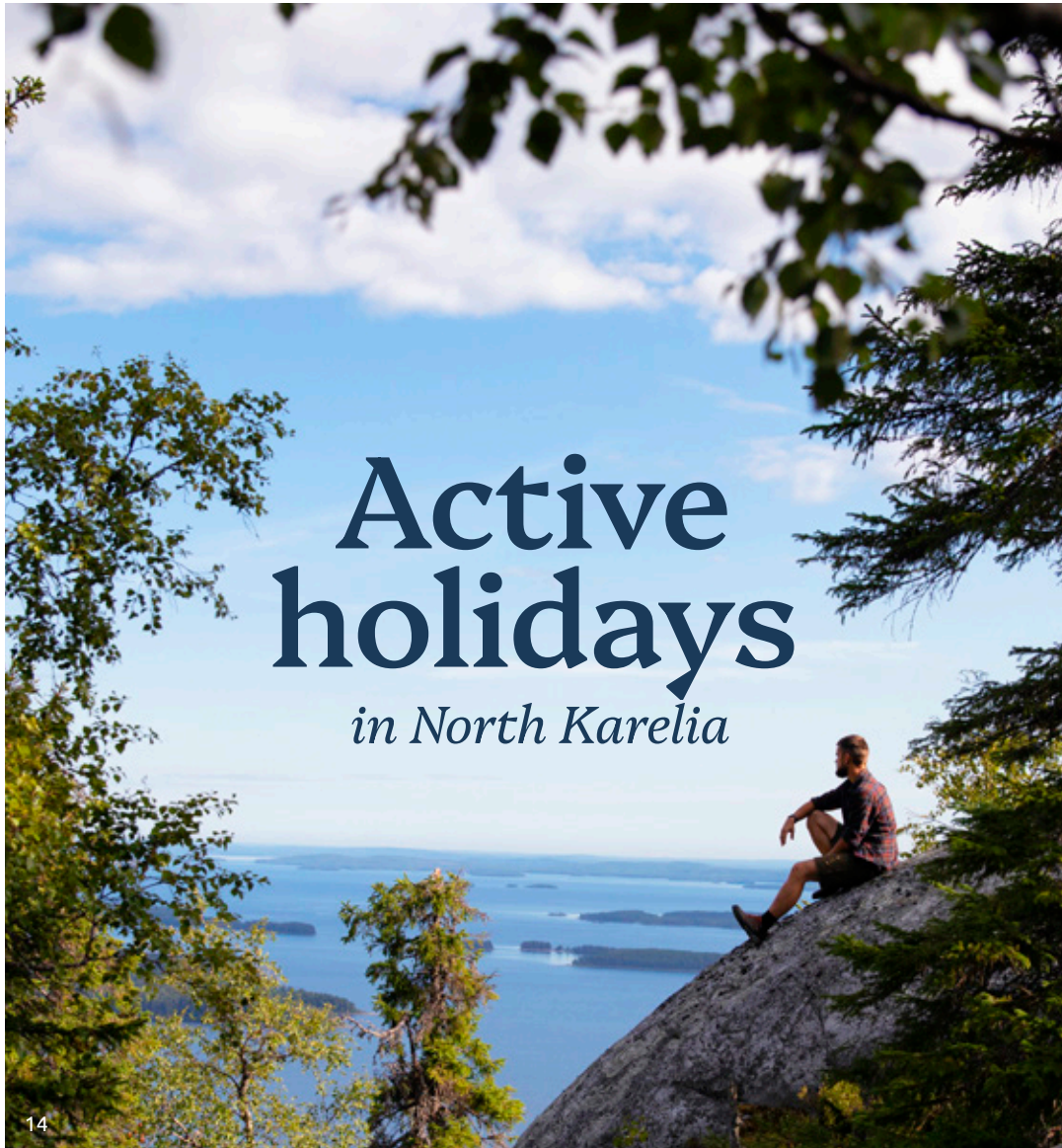
**Contact details for booking:**

sales@aksydammat.fi



**Recognitions & awards:**  
Best food tourism product in Hungry  
for Finland competition  
2015





# Active holidays

*in North Karelia*



ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT DMC

New product

## Hiking tour from monastery to monastery

HEINÄVESI

- ◆ Walk between two Orthodox monasteries
- ◆ Find your inner spirit

### ITINERARY

Experience North Karelia's serene beauty on a guided hike between the Orthodox monasteries of Valamo and Lintula. Walk through tranquil forests, discover the monasteries' history, and immerse yourself in their daily life, finding peace and spirituality along the way. This hiking tour covers a distance of 20 km over 2 days and follows narrow paths and sandy roads and is suitable for anyone with average level of fitness.



**Duration:**

3 days / 2 nights

**Validity:**

mid-Jun-Sep 2025 and 2026

**Minimum pax amount:**

2 pax

**Inclusions:**

2 nights accommodation, lunch, dinners, sauna, breakfast, luggage transfer from Valamo to the guesthouse, transfers within programme, guide services.

**From price (gross per person on twin share):**

400 € pp in a twin

**Optional activities:**

Monastery cruises available during 24 Jun-16 Aug on Tue-Sat

**Arrival point:**

Joensuu airport or train station

**Transfer times:**

Joensuu airport-Valamo 58 km

**Contact details for booking:**

sales@aksytammat.fi



## All inclusive hiking tour to national parks

NATIONAL PARKS OF KOLI,  
HIIDENPORTTI & TIILIKKAJÄRVI  
AND RAESÄRKÄT NATURE RESERVE

- ◆ Experience 3 national parks and 1 nature reserve on a fully escorted small group hiking tour
- ◆ Enjoy pure nature and vast forests on foot
- ◆ Listen to stories along the way by local guide

### ITINERARY

Explore Finland's stunning national parks and nature reserves on this guided hiking tour. Discover the diverse landscapes of Koli, Tiilikka, Hiidenportti, and Raesärkä, and enjoy local culture and cuisine. The tour is suited to those with average level of fitness with daily distances between 4-10 km per day. Tour highlights include a short Finnish course for beginners, optional canoeing, swim in lakes inbetween hikes and national landscape of Koli.

**Duration:**  
8 days / 7 nights

**Validity:**  
Guaranteed departures in 2025:

- 17-24 May
- 7-14 Jun
- 30 Aug-6 Sep
- 20-27 Sep

For 2026, similar dates will be available, please contact Äksyt Ämmät for exact dates.

**Minimum pax amount:**  
2 pax (tour operates with min of 4 pax)

**Inclusions:**  
7 nights accommodation on twin share with full board in a guesthouse, guided hiking tours and all transportation from/to KUO airport.

**From price (gross per person on twin share):**  
1470 € pp in a twin

**Optional activities:**  
Single supplement from 320 € pp  
Additional day from 80 € pppn on BB basis

**Arrival point:**  
Joensuu airport, Kuopio airport

**Transfer times:**  
Joensuu airport-Nurmes 1 hr 40 mins, Kuopio airport-Nurmes 1 hr 30 mins. Joensuu airport transfer from 400 €/one way

**Contact details for booking:**  
sales@aksydammat.fi



## Tour de Pielinen by e-bike

JOENSUU, KOLI,  
JUUKA, NURMES

- ◆ Cycle without luggage around Lake Pielinen
- ◆ Experience the magnificent national landscape and forested hills on two wheels
- ◆ Learn about Karelian culture

### ITINERARY

Embark on a scenic biking tour around Lake Pielinen, exploring the charming villages and forested hills of North Karelia. Highlights include the famous national landscape of Koli, opportunities to meet locals, and savouring Karelian cuisine. This 8-day tour is suitable for those with a normal fitness level and features mostly gravel roads. Luggage transfers between accommodations are included.

**Duration:**  
8 days / 7 nights

**Validity:**  
1 Jun-30 Sep 2025 & 2026

**Minimum pax amount:**  
2 pax

**Inclusions:**  
7 nights accommodation on twin share on halfboard basis, 4 x sauna, e-bike rental, maintenance guarantee everyday and luggage transport between accommodations.

**From price (net per person on twin share):**  
1500 € pp in a twin

**Arrival point:**  
Joensuu airport or train station

**Transfer times:**  
Joensuu airport-Joensuu city centre 15 mins

**Contact details for booking:**  
sales@aksydammat.fi



# Holiday by a lake

## Cottage by Lake Saimaa at Ruoke Holiday Village

KITEE (LAKE PURUVESI)

- ◆ Enjoy 'mökki' holiday  
by Lake Saimaa
- ◆ Stay for a week in a cottage  
with own sauna
- ◆ Live like a local for a week

### ITINERARY

Enjoy a weeklong lakeside getaway by Lake Puruvesi in your own private cottage with a sauna. Lake Puruvesi is known as one of the clearest lakes in Finland offering a perfect base to enjoy lakeside and water activities. Your stay includes a week long accommodation and we recommend adding a car hire either from Joensuu or Savonlinna. Holiday village offers weekly programme mid-June to end of August.

#### Duration:

8 days / 7 nights

#### Validity:

mid-Jun-Sep 2025 and 2026

#### Minimum pax amount:

2 pax

#### Inclusions:

7 night stay on self catering basis in a 2-bedroom fully equipped cottage with sauna inc. Bedlinen and final cleaning. Meals available at extra cost.

#### From price (net per person on twin share):

340 € pp in a twin

#### Arrival point:

Joensuu airport, Savonlinna airport

#### Transfer times:

Joensuu-Ruoke 100 km, Savonlinna-Ruoke 65 km

#### Contact details for booking:

info@ruokkeenlomakyla.fi

#### Optional activities

- Fat bike rental **from 25 € pp for 2 hrs**
- Traditional fish soup dinner by open fire **from 16,50 € pp** (available on Mondays)
- Open fire smoked salmon dinner **from 40 € pp** (available on Wednesdays)
- Private fishing trip on Lake Puruvesi **from 250 € pp for 4 hrs**
- Private smoke sauna experience **from 270 €/evening for 1-6 people**
- Stand up paddle boarding rental **from 25 € pp for 2 hrs**





# Stay on a private island

RÄÄKKYLÄ (LAKE SAIMAA)

- ◆ Stay on a private island in Lake Saimaa
- ◆ Spend a relaxing week in an island idyll
- ◆ Art, kantele and Karelian pastries

## ITINERARY

Stay on a private island in the Northern Saimaa lake district in a newly built Karelian style cottage. Enjoy swimming, walks in the nature and lakeside relaxation on your own island. The island is connected to mainland by a man made road allowing you to easily explore the area. We recommend a rental car from Joensuu.



**Duration:**  
7 days / 6 nights

**Validity:**  
Jun-Sep 2025 and 2026  
**Minimum pax amount:**  
2 pax

**Inclusions:**  
7 nights stay on self catering basis in a 2-bedroom villa with a loft and sauna inc. Bed linen, final cleaning, wifi, free use of rowing boat, canoe and bikes. Meals, art, kantele and Karelian pastry workshops at extra cost.

**From price (net per person on twin share):**  
1047 € pp in a twin

**Arrival point:**  
Joensuu airport or train station  
**Transfer times:**  
Joensuu-Karelia Cottages 60 km  
**Contact details for booking:**  
info@kareliacottages.fi



North Karelia Biosphere Reserve's sustainable development partner  
**Karelia Cottages**



# Tarina-aho

KOLI (LAKE PIELINEN)

- ◆ Unique island accommodation
- ◆ Private cruise on Lake Pielinen included
- ◆ Daily sauna and swimming in a lake

## ITINERARY

Stay in a unique accommodation on an island in Lake Pielinen and in the middle of Koli national park. A stay in Tarina-aho is like a trip back in time: leave the busyness of modern life behind and enjoy the simple pleasures of life like sauna, swimming in a lake, nature walks, great food and no timetable.



**Duration:**  
4 days / 3 nights  
**Validity:**  
Jun-Sep 2025 and 2026  
**Minimum pax amount:**  
2 pax

**Inclusions:**  
3 night stay on BB basis, sauna every day, return boat transfers from/to Koli harbour and 2 hr private cruise on Lake Pielinen  
**From price (net per person on twin share):**  
649 € pp in a twin

**Arrival point:**  
Joensuu airport or train station  
**Transfer times:**  
Joensuu-Koli harbour 80 km  
+ 15 min boat transfer  
**Contact details for booking:**  
info@tarina-aho.com



Tarina-aho is on their way to achieve Sustainable Travel Finland certificate

# Events & more

## Koli Gravel Carnival

**Koli national park - 24 May 2025**

Join this friendly and relaxed gravel bike event in Koli national park's magnificent scenery. Choose a distance from 40km, 90km or 150 km.

*Kuva: Christer Ådahl*



## Kontiolahti biathlon

**Kontiolahti - 3-8 March 2026**

Experience world class sporting event in Kontiolahti when world's best biathletes compete in snowy North Karelia. Combine thrilling races with a stay in Koli national park or Bomba's luxurious lakeside hotel.

**Sustainability certificate**  
EcoCompass environmental  
management system

*Kuva: Esa Kimmunen*



## Lieksa Brass Week

**Lieksa - 25 Jul -2 Aug 2025  
& 24 Jul -1 Aug 2026**

Lieksa Brass Week is the biggest brass music festival in the Nordic countries and 2025 is its 44th year. Lieksa Brass Week includes music courses, international competition and the classical concert series as well as open air performances.



## East Finland Wool Festival

**Nurmes - 23 - 24 August 2025  
& 22 - 23 Aug 2026**

East Finland wool festival is known of its unique atmosphere. Crafters gather to enjoy yarn market, lectures and knitting, spinning or crocheting together! Event is held next to the lake Pielinen which offers most beautiful setting for craft enthusiasts to enjoy knitting.







## Bear Festival

**Ilomantsi - 14-16 Aug 2025  
& 13-15 Aug 2026**

One of Finland's largest and the easternmost chainsaw carving event in Ilomantsi where artists around the world compete to create different bear sculptures out of wood.

*Kuva: Lauri Kontkanen*

## Koli marathon

**Koli national park  
3-4 Oct 2025 & 3-4 Oct 2026**

Join one of Finland's most scenic running races in Koli national park, suitable for different levels of runners. Choose a trail race from 7km, half or full marathon, extreme 65 km or ultra 130km.



## Kihaus folk festival

**Rääkkylä - 27-29 Jun 2025**

The festival is Finland's only event dedicated solely to showcasing the rich folk music and cultural traditions of North Karelia.

## Winter garden & Visual festival

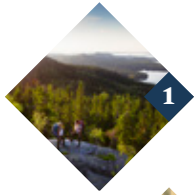
**Joensuu - 27 Dec 2024-31  
Mar 2025. Visual Festival late  
Nov/early Dec 2025**

Experience magical winter wonderland at Botania's Winter Garden with Finland's longest ice slide, a massive snow labyrinth, stunning ice sculptures illuminated by atmospheric lighting and a lush tropical paradise inside Botania's greenhouses.



**Read more  
[visitkarelia.fi/en/events-in-north-karelia](https://visitkarelia.fi/en/events-in-north-karelia)**

# Places of interest



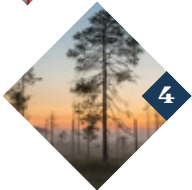
**Koli National Park**  
The most iconic landscape of Finland.



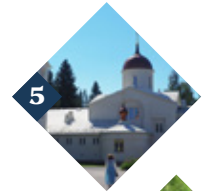
**Kolovesi National Park**  
Habitat of rare Saimaa ringed seal & ancient rock paintings.



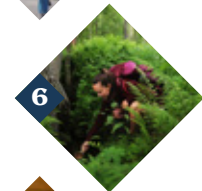
**Bomba, the Karelian Village**  
Authentic Karelian architecture.



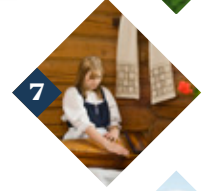
**Patvinsuo National Park**  
Largest national park in southern Finland & habitat of bears.



**Valamo and Lintula**  
Iconic Orthodox monasteries.



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



**Parpeinvaara Rune Singer's Village**  
Traditional Karelian hill-top village with museum and a restaurant.



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



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



**Kontiolahti Biathlon Stadium**  
Biathlon World Cup.



# Travelling in the region

Connections	Taxi <i>All taxi prices are based on 1-4 people sharing a taxi</i>	Train	Bus
Joensuu-Koli or vv	145 €; journey time 1 hr		45 € pp; on demand bus service (once a day at 12.00 from Joensuu)
Koli-Nurmes/Bomba or vv	170 €; journey time 1 hr 5 mins		Approx 16 € pp; one connection per day; journey time 1,5 hrs
Nurmes/Bomba-Joensuu or vv	255 €; journey time 1 hr 45 mins	13-20 € pp; 2 trains per day; journey time 2 hrs	Approx 24 € pp; several bus connections per day; journey time 2 hrs-2,5 hrs
Joensuu-Ilomantsi or vv	165 €; journey time 1 hr		Approx 14 € pp; several connections per day; journey time 1 hr 10 min-1,5 hrs
Joensuu-Heinävesi or vv Joensuu-Valamo monastery, Heinävesi	165 €; journey time 1 hr 10 mins 140 €; journey time 1 hr 10 mins	14-20 € pp; 2 trains per day; journey time 1 hr	18 € pp; one connection per day; journey time 1 hr 20 mins
Joensuu-Rääkkylä or vv	145 €; journey time 50 mins		18 € pp; one connection per day; journey time 1 hr 40 mins
Joensuu-Kitee or vv	160 €; journey time 1 hr	8-15 € pp; several trains per day; journey time 0,5 hrs	Approx 12 € pp; several connections per day; journey time 1 hr 20 min-1,5 hrs
Joensuu airport-Joensuu city centre	35 €; journey time 15 mins		4 € pp; busses meet Finnair flights
	<b>Book here:</b> myynti@meneva.fi asiakaspalvelu@kolintaksi.fi	<b>Book here:</b> www.vr.fi	<b>For timetables, please visit</b> www.matkahuolto.fi/en Tickets are available from driver.

For more information, visit here: [www.visitkarelia.fi/en/getting-here](http://www.visitkarelia.fi/en/getting-here)

# Sustainability in North Karelia

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 this manual.



For more information, visit  
[www.visitkarelia.fi/en/stories-of-sustainability](http://www.visitkarelia.fi/en/stories-of-sustainability)



## North Karelia 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.





# 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

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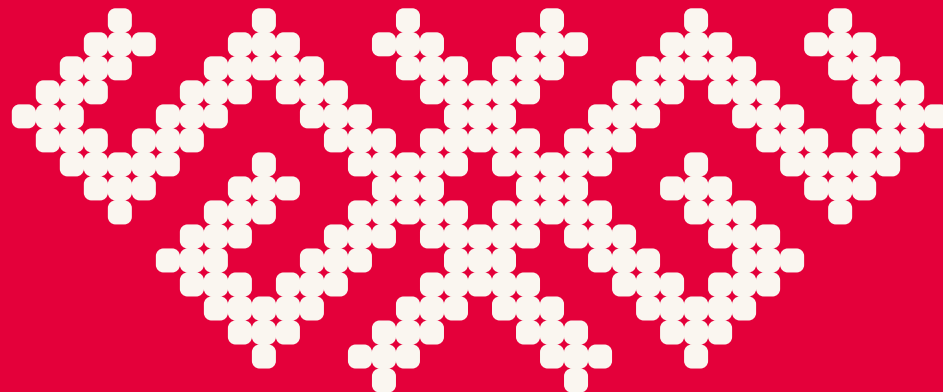


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