
VisitKarelia
Product Manual
FOR THE TRAVEL TRADE 2027-2029

Welcome to North Karelia

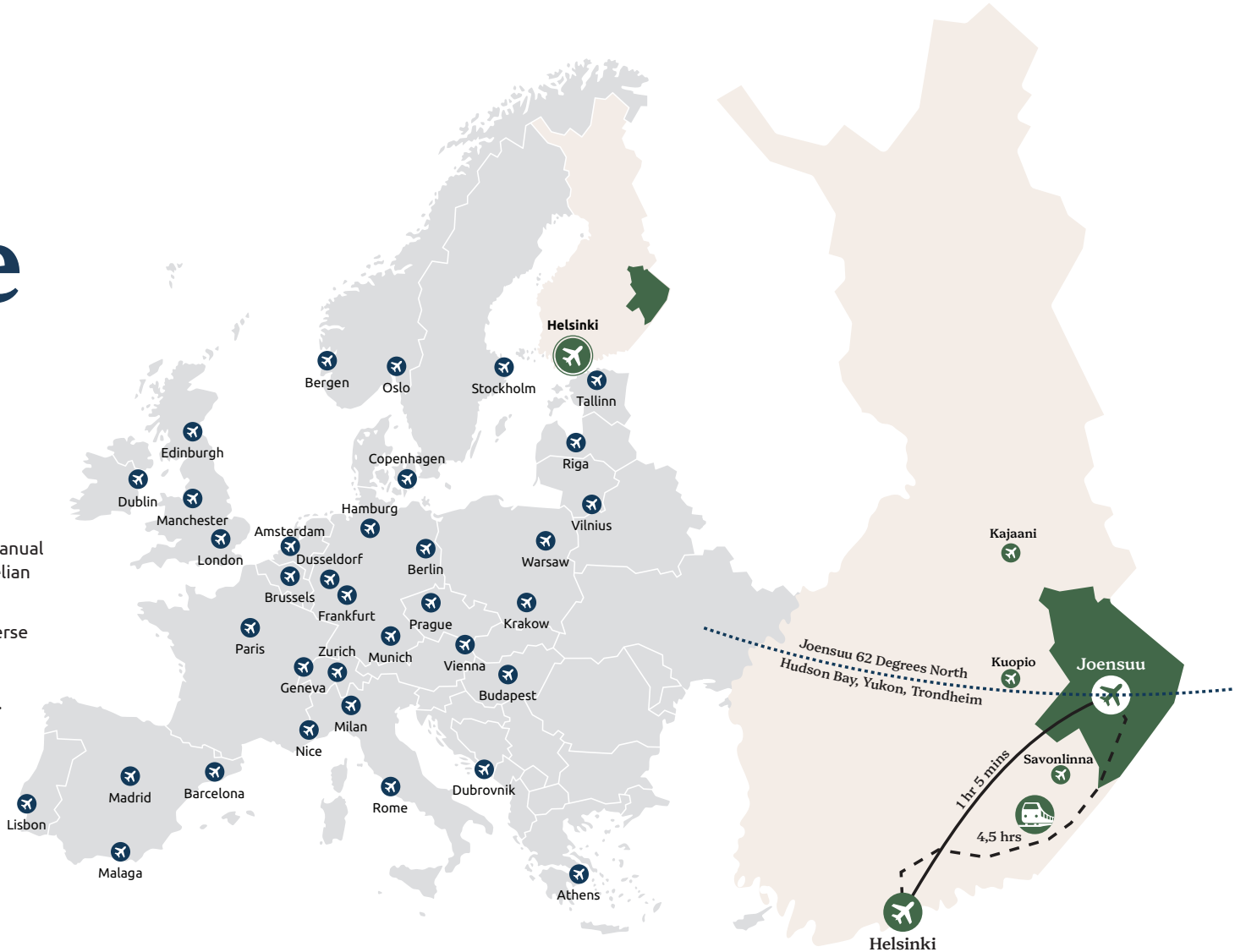
We are delighted to introduce you our updated product manual for travel trade, showcasing a selection of best North Karelian products and events.

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 (=*karelian pie*)*.

Come and experience North Karelia, the Soul of Finland!

VisitKarelia team

All prices are correct as of Oct 2026 and are subject to change without notice.



Welcome to Lakeland Finland

The largest Lakeland district in Europe, Finnish Lakeland, is a blue labyrinth of lakes, islands, rivers and canals, interspersed with forests and ridges. Finland has 188 000 lakes and most of them are situated in the heart of Finland.

Reasons to visit Lakeland Finland:

- **The land of the 1000 lakes**
- **Finnish national landscape**
- **Home of the sauna**
- **Have a holiday like the Finns do**



Award-Winning Experiences in the Soul of Finland

North Karelia is home to some of Finland's most acclaimed travel experiences, attractions and tourism businesses. From award-winning accommodation and outdoor experiences to nationally recognised destinations, these achievements reflect the region's commitment to authenticity, sustainability and high-quality visitor experiences. Discover why North Karelia continues to earn recognition both in Finland and internationally.

Throughout this product manual, you'll find award and recognition highlights featured alongside the products and experiences they celebrate, helping you discover some of the very best North Karelia has to offer. North Karelia is also proud to hold the title of Most Authentic Cultural & Nature Tourism Destination 2026



The most authentic cultural and nature tourism destination 2026
(European Travel Awards)

Lietsu Boutique Aparthotel
Top 3 nominee for best hotel in Finland in 2026 (Finnish Travel Gala) and Karelia à la carte company of the year 2025

Äksyt Ämmät DMC
Top 3 nominee for best specialist tour operator in Finland in 2026 (Finnish Travel Gala)

Hermanni Vineyard
Only Nordic vineyard in Fifty Places to Drink Wine Before You Die 2026

Venejoen Piilo
Best accommodation of the year 2025 (Scandinavian Outdoor Group)

Karhun Talo Pilgrimage around Lake Pielinen
Best outdoor product for individuals 2025 (Scandinavian Outdoor Group)

Break Sokos Hotel Bomba
Best hotel in Finland 2024 (Finnish Travel Gala)

Koli
Outdoor travel destination of the year 2023 (Scandinavian Outdoor Group)

8 reasons to visit North Karelia

Experience snowfilled winter in Koli & Bomba
(pages 8–9, 14–15, 16–17 & 27)

Stay in unique accommodation
(pages 18–19, 22–23, 28–29, 30–31)

Experience local Karelian culture
(pages 8–9, 18–19, 30–31)

Discover Finland's iconic & national park landscapes
(pages 8–19, 22–27)

Taste authentic Karelian flavours
(pages 24–25, 32–33)

Experience Untouched Wilderness & Wildlife
(pages 20–21 & 31)

Live like a local and enjoy sauna & 'mökki' by a lake
(pages 28–29)

Join one of our many events
(pages 34–35)

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

GROUP TOUR TO KOLI & BOMBA

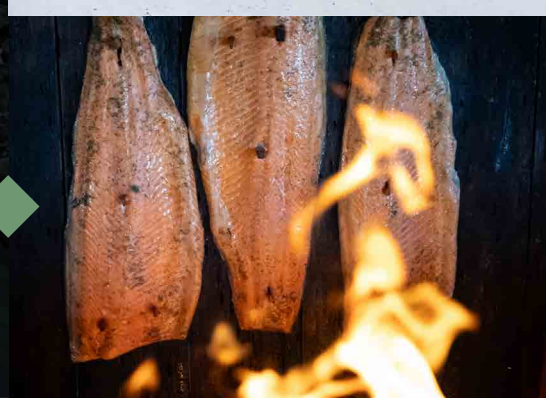
Snowy winter break



Karelian culture



Karelian dinner and pastry workshop



MAGICAL WINTER HOLIDAY AT KOLI & BOMBA

ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrival in Joensuu Airport & transfer to Koli

Arrival at Joensuu Airport. 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 & winter magic

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before a leisurely day exploring Koli's famous national landscape. A guided snowshoe tour takes you through magical snow-covered scenery and introduces you to the beauty of Koli in winter. A soup lunch is provided at the hotel, and the afternoon is free for more activities. Choose from optional activities such as a guided tour to Koli's famous peaks or a skiing lesson at Koli Ski. After an active day outdoors, unwind in the warmth of Koli Relax Spa. End the day with a 3-course dinner.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND

Green Key

BREAK SOKOS HOTEL KOLI
BREAK SOKOS HOTEL BOMBA

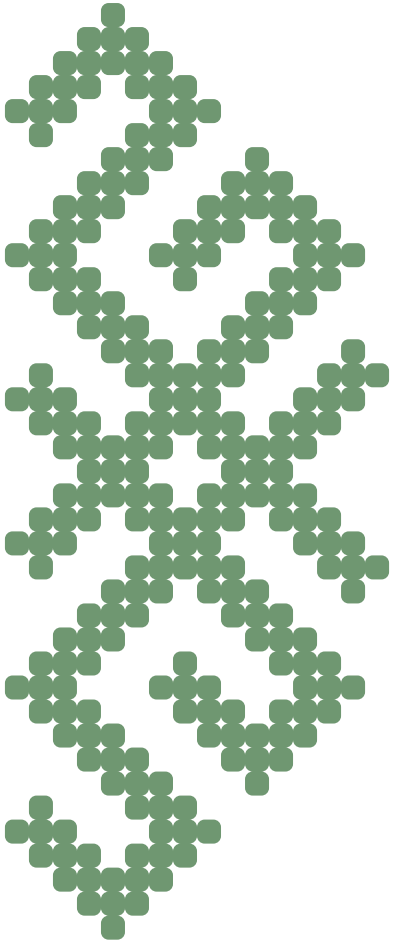
Day 3 Bomba & Karelian pie workshop

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 rice porridge filling. 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 from activities such as tobogganing, a cross-country skiing lesson or a kick-sled tour. A three-course dinner is included at the hotel.

Day 4 Guided tour of Bomba House & dinner by the fire

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: relax at Spa Bomba, head out on a snowmobile safari or meet friendly huskies on a safari in the Juuka area. In the evening, enjoy dinner by the fire at Bomba's Kalevan Koto, a traditional hut where you can experience the flavours of local cuisine.

Day 5 Farewell & departure



DURATION 5 days / 4 nights
VALIDITY January–March 2027–2029
MINIMUM PAX AMOUNT 11 pax

INCLUSIONS
4 nights accommodation at Break Sokos Hotel Koli and Break Sokos Hotel Bomba on twin share basis including full board inc. dinner by the fire, Karelian pie workshop, one activity in Bomba, guided tour of the Bomba House, one activity in Koli and a visit in Koli Relax Spa.

FROM PRICE (NET PER PERSON ON TWIN SHARE)
569 € 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

- **Downhill skiing at Koli Ski**
  from 41 €/person per day (excluding equipment)
- **Ski school at Koli Ski**
  from 50 €/1h/person
- **Guided tour of the tops at Koli**
  from 29 €/person
- **Kalevala menu at Bomba House**
  from 62 €/person
- **Guided Altai ski tour in Bomba**
  from 59 €/person/1 hour
- **Bomba Snowmobile safari**
  from 129 €/person/2 hours
- **Visit at Spa Bomba**
  from 17 € per person
- **Husky safari in Juuka**
  from 68 €/person

Break Sokos Hotel Bomba
Best hotel in Finland 2024
(Finnish Travel Gala)

New product

Summer wonders of North Karelia

GROUP TOUR TO
JOENSUU, KOLI, BOMBA, ILOMANTSI

Nightless Night and authentic nature



Cruise on pure and clean lakes



Karelian culture and cuisine



SUMMER WONDERS OF NORTH KARELIA CRUISE

ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrival in Joensuu

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

Day 2 Join us for a spectacular voyage through Eastern Finland – a truly unforgettable adventure awaits!

Your journey begins with a transfer to Joensuu Harbour, where the m/s Sinivuokko awaits. The cruise departs from Joensuu, the heart of Karelia, offering a warm introduction to the region's renowned hospitality, local flavours, and the tranquil atmosphere of this nature-inspired city. Aboard the 180-passenger river cruise vessel, you will travel along the traditional Pielisjoki waterway and across Lake Pielinen, surrounded by pristine wilderness and stunning waterside scenery.

Throughout the day, you can relax and enjoy the changing landscapes while a welcome drink, lunch, afternoon coffee, and onboard entertainment enhance the experience.

The voyage culminates in Koli, home to Finland's most iconic national park and one of the country's most treasured national landscapes. Upon arrival, a transfer takes you to Break Sokos Hotel Koli, where you will enjoy dinner and an overnight stay amidst the spectacular scenery of Koli.

Day 3 Explore the beautiful Koli National Park and Karelian Culture, Cuisine and Relaxation in Bomba

After breakfast, discover the breathtaking landscapes of Koli National Park on a guided nature walk. Admire the famous views over Lake Pielinen from the park's highest viewpoints, Ukko-Koli, Akka-Koli and Paha-Koli, while learning about the area's rich history, culture and natural heritage from a local guide.

Following the excursion, continue to Nurmes and the Bomba Karelian Village, where a guided tour introduces the traditions and spirit of Karelia.

In the evening, enjoy a Karelian dinner featuring local specialties prepared with a contemporary touch, followed by time to unwind at the atmospheric Bomba Spa. Surrounded by the beauty of the Lakeland region, the spa offers a unique blend of relaxation and Karelian mystique through its distinctive saunas and wellness experiences. Overnight at Bomba.

Day 4 Explore the Karelian History and Arts in Lieksa and Paateri

After breakfast, travel to Lieksa to explore the Pielinen Museum, Finland's second-largest open-air museum, where historic farmsteads, forestry buildings and rural heritage tell the story of life in North Karelia through the centuries. Lunch is served at the charming Guesthouse Herranniemi, renowned for its traditional Karelian cuisine prepared from local ingredients.

The journey continues to Paateri, the former home and atelier of acclaimed sculptor Eva Ryynänen, beautifully situated on the shores of Lake Pielinen. Here, visitors can admire her unique wooden sculptures and architecture, including her home, atelier, gallery café and remarkable timber church. In the afternoon, return to Joensuu for dinner and an overnight stay at Original Sokos Hotel Kimmel.

Day 5 Cultural and Historical Journey: Exploring Parppeinvaara and Möhkö

After breakfast, the journey continues east by coach to the villages of Parppeinvaara and Möhkö. At the Parppeinvaara Rune Singer's Village, guests are introduced to the rich traditions of Karelian culture through local stories, kantele music, and exhibitions that showcase the region's heritage.

The tour then proceeds to Möhkö, Finland's easternmost village, where a guided visit reveals the history of the Möhkö Ironworks, the area's military past, and the significance of forestry in shaping local life. Lunch and a coffee break are included during the day. In the evening, the journey returns to Joensuu for dinner and an overnight stay at Original Sokos Hotel Kimmel.

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

DURATION 6 days / 5 nights
VALIDITY Summer 2027, 2028 and 2029 on request basis for minimum of 20 pax.
MINIMUM PAX AMOUNT 20 pax

INCLUSIONS
5 night accommodation on BB basis, all transfers, a cruise with welcome drink, lunch, afternoon coffee and program 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 1155 € pp in a twin
Min 40 pax 1050 € pp in a twin
Min 50 pax 1030 € 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.

Break Sokos Hotel Bomba
Best hotel in Finland 2024
(Finnish Travel Gala)

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND | POHJOLAN MATKA

Mythical Koli & Lake Pielinen

Summer Group Tour

KOLI, JUUKA, KONTIOLAHTI, BOMBA



Scenic hikes in Koli national park



Lake Pielinen cruise



Ruunaa rapids boat trip

EXPERIENCE THE BEST OF KOLI & LAKE PIELINEN

ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrival in Koli

Guests arrive in Joensuu by either plane or train, transfer to Break Sokos Hotel Koli Kylä for check-in, and enjoy a welcome dinner at Restaurant Tervaskanto.

Day 2 Trails, Taste & Tradition

After breakfast the day begins with a guided hike in scenic Koli National Park, followed by a visit to the Nature Centre Ukko. Coffee and pastries are served by the campfire. Later optional activities such as a scenic lift ride or gin tasting are available in the afternoon. Dinner is served at hotel Restaurant Tervaskanto.

Day 3 Pedals & Local Past

After breakfast at the hotel, guests take part in a guided e-fatbike tour around Koli's forest trails. In the afternoon there is an option to visit the Old Town of Juuka, and the day concludes with dinner at Bistro Ryynänen in Koli village.

Day 4 Art, Lake & Leisure

Once the guests have enjoyed breakfast, the morning features a guided visit to the Koli Sculpture Garden. Afterward, the group enjoys a scenic cruise on Lake Pielinen aboard M/S Marival, followed by an early dinner at the hotel and evening tea at the historic Venejoen Mylly mill.

Day 5 Rapids & Regional Flavors

After breakfast at the hotel, the group transfers to Ruunaa Hiking Area for a thrilling boat trip on the rapids, including a traditional Karelian wilderness lunch. Later, guests continue to Bomba, check in at Break Sokos Hotel Bomba, and end the day with dinner at hotel Restaurant Frans & Emma.

Day 6 Rowing, Baking & Bomba Bliss

Once breakfast has been enjoyed, the guests participate in a hands-on Karelian pie baking workshop and have the option to join a rowing picnic trip on Lake Pielinen. The afternoon is reserved for relaxation at Bomba Spa, and the day ends with a cozy dinner in a traditional Kota hut.

Day 7 Farewell & Culture

On the final day, guests check out and transfer toward Joensuu, stopping to visit Paateri, the lakeside home and atelier of sculptor Eva Ryynänen. Afterwards, guests continue to their departure point.

DURATION 7 days / 6 nights
VALIDITY June–September 2027–29
MINIMUM PAX AMOUNT 10 pax

INCLUSIONS
6 nights accommodation with half board and guided activities as described. Transportation costs on request.

PRICE FROM
1250 € per person (20–25 pax)
1350 € per person (10–19 pax)

ARRIVAL POINT
Joensuu (airport or railway station)

TRANSFER TIMES

Joensuu – Koli	1 hr
Koli – Ruunaa	1 hr
Koli – Bomba	1 hr
Ruunaa – Bomba	2 hrs
Bomba – Juuka	40 min
Juuka – Joensuu	1 hr

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
Mythical Finland DMC, sales@koli.fi

Koli
Best outdoor destination in the Nordics 2023, Scandinavian Outdoor Travel Awards

Mythical Adventure

Discover Secrets of Finnishness

WINTER GROUP TOUR TO JOENSUU, KOLI & BOMBA

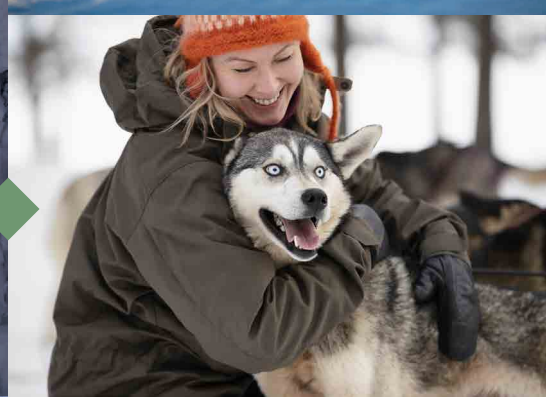
Authentic cultural encounters & Karelian heritage



Activities to connect with nature



Village life and a Husky experience



MYTHICAL ADVENTURE – DISCOVER SECRETS OF FINNISHNESS

ITINERARY

Day 1 First Steps into the Story

The journey begins in Joensuu, where modern life meets Karelian tradition. After check-in the group visits the annually different Winter Sculpture Garden in Botania. The winter magic is at its best in the dark, when the gentle lights and sounds make the huge snow sculptures almost alive. Afterwards you are warmly welcomed for dinner at your hotel restaurant.

Day 2 Journey into the Heartland

The breakfast is followed by a one hour transfer to Koli and Koli national park. After a visit to the Nature Centre Ukko you make a 1,2 km walk (spikes available) to admire the view from the snow-covered tops of Koli. The group takes also time to make photos surrounded by the trees that can carry hundreds, even thousands, of kilos of snow at their branches. Lunch is served in the panorama restaurant before transfer to your accommodation in the village.

As an optional program you can book a wool sock walk in the snow with local guide. This tour is possible also after dinner when there are the best possibilities to spot also the Northern lights if the sky is clear. Dinner at your own cost and choice at the hotel restaurant or at the local Gastropub Kolin Ryynänen across the road.

Day 3 Village life and a Husky experience

In the morning you head to the husky farm. Everyone has a chance to try driving while the second person is sitting in the sledge and afterwards hot drinks are served in a warm jurtta tent. At this farm they only welcome a limited amount of people during the day, so there is no rush in taking pictures, petting the friendly dogs and having a chat with the owner Leila or her helpers.

Later, a lovely lunch is served in Juuka village. Several old houses in this village are renovated as a hotel. The help of the local people has been important during the renovation. Juuka is also known for producing soap stone. After lunch you make a short walk around the village with local guide and participate a stone carving workshop in order to carve a small souvenir for yourself or for someone waiting for you at home. Transfer to Bomba holiday resort takes another hour. Dinner at your own choice and cost in the hotel restaurant.

Day 4 Karelian Culture & Dinner in Kota Hut

In the morning you make a guided walk in the hotel premises and visit the iconic Bomba House and a small Orthodox prayer room, tsasouna. Then you test snow shoe walking and kicksledging.

Around lunch time you learn how to bake Karelian pies. The name of these salty little pasties is protected by EU. You surely have seen and even tasted them already during your stay but nothing beats an oven-warm self-baked product. For dinner you are expected in the wooden kota hut by the frozen lake.

Day 5 Snowfun & Spa time

The morning starts by dividing the group in two. The first group is going to try the Finnish National sport, ice fishing. This habit of making a hole in the ice and sitting there quietly, waiting for a catch, could also be called as Finnish meditation.
The second team is going for a snowmobile tour. After two hours the groups are changing the activities.

The afternoon is reserved for relaxation at Bomba Spa. Your Farewell Dinner is served at the hotel restaurant.

Day 6 Farewell

Transfer to Joensuu / Kuopio / Kajaani airport for your journey home.

DURATION 6 days / 5 nights
PERIOD January–March 2027–2029
GROUP SIZE 11–40 pax

NET PRICE FROM
1388 € / person in twin room (11 – 20 paying pax)
1332 € / person in twin room (21 – 30 paying pax)
1295 € / person in twin room (31 – 40 paying pax)

PRICE INCLUDES
Mentioned bus transfers, 5 overnights in good 3–4 star hotels, half board (breakfast daily, 3 x dinner, 2 x lunch).

Entrance to Botania Winter Garden, guided walk to the Koli peak, entrance fee to Nature Center Ukko, Husky experience and sledge ride, guided walk in Juuka, soap stone carving workshop, guided walk in Bomba holiday resort, snowshoe walk & kicksledge driving, Karelian pie baking work shop, 1 x spa entrance at Bomba, ice fishing experience, snowmobilesafari, thermo clothing from Joensuu–Bomba, free place for your tour leader in single room.

FOR ADDITIONAL PRICE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST
- Finnish tour guide
- additional meals and programs
- train tickets Helsinki – Joensuu (only when connected to this package)

ARRIVAL POINT
Joensuu (airport or railway station)

TRANSFER TIMES
Joensuu – Koli 1 hr
Koli – Juuka 45 minutes
Juuka – Bomba 1 hr
Bomba – Kuopio/Kajaani/Joensuu airport
1hr 45 minutes – 2 hr

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
Mythical Finland DMC, sales@koli.fi

Koli
Best outdoor destination in the Nordics 2023, Scandinavian Outdoor Travel Awards

Break Sokos Hotel Bomba
Best hotel in Finland 2024 (Finnish Travel Gala)

New product

Three Lakeland Peaks

in Winter

ESCORTED GROUP TOUR TO KOLI, JUUKA, BOMBA, ARCTIC LAKELAND & NORTH SAVO

Three Peaks of Eastern Lakeland



Authentic Karelian culture & traditions



Arctic winter adventures & Finnish Wellness



THREE LAKELAND PEAKS – A FRESH VIEW TO FINLAND

ITINERARY

Day 1 *Joensuu – Koli*
Arrival & the Magic of Koli

Arrival in Joensuu and transfer through the wintry Lakeland scenery to Koli, the first of the Three Peaks and home to Finland's iconic national landscape.

Check in at Break Sokos Hotel Koli and settle into the peaceful atmosphere overlooking frozen Lake Pielinen. In the evening, enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Optional: Wool Sock Yoga and Koli Relax Spa, combining Finnish sauna, warm pools and magnificent winter views.

Day 2 *Koli – Puu-Juuka*
Peaks, Wooden Village & Huskies

After breakfast, explore the legendary landscapes of Koli National Park on a guided Peaks Tour. Enjoy spectacular winter views while discovering stories of Finnish nature, history and culture.

Continue to Puu-Juuka, a historic wooden village, for a guided walking tour introducing its unique architecture, heritage and local stories.

The journey continues with an exhilarating husky sled ride through the snowy wilderness. Meet the huskies and warm up afterwards by a crackling fire.

Dinner and an atmospheric overnight stay in the historic wooden surroundings of Puu-Juuka.

Optional: A Night Under the Stars in the remote Paalasmaa archipelago, where silence, snowy landscapes and dark skies create the perfect setting for experiencing the magic of a Finnish winter night and, with luck, the Northern Lights.

Day 3 *Puu-Juuka – Bomba*
The Soul Of Karelia

Travel to Bomba, where Karelian culture, stories and flavours come alive. Discover the famous Bomba House on a guided tour and take part in a hands-on Karelian Pie Workshop with a local baker. Taste your freshly baked pies while learning about one of Finland's best-known culinary traditions.

Continue into the snowy forest on a peaceful traditional wooden sleigh ride, followed by a warm drink around the campfire.

Later, unwind at Break Sokos Hotel Bomba Spa, where warm pools, an outdoor hot tub and the opportunity to try traditional Finnish ice swimming await. The day ends with a Karelian festive dinner inspired by the flavours and traditions of the region.

Day 4 *Bomba – Vuokatti*
From Karelia To Arctic Lakeland

Journey through snow-covered Eastern Finland to Arctic Lakeland and Vuokatti, Peak Two.

Check in at Break Sokos Hotel Vuokatti and enjoy free time in the winter resort surroundings. Guests can explore the snowy landscape, go skiing, enjoy traditional Finnish tobogganing or simply slow down and embrace the winter atmosphere.

In the evening, enjoy the flavours of Arctic Lakeland at Restaurant Kippo.

Optional: Reindeer Farm Experience in Suomussalmi, including meeting the reindeer, a sleigh ride, an introduction to reindeer herding traditions and a warming traditional meal in a Finnish kota.

Day 5 *Vuokatti –Tahko*
Forest Spa & Flavours At The Top

Continue to North Savo and Tahko, Peak Three, and settle into the spectacular surroundings of Panorama Landscape Hotel.

Enjoy time to experience the winter resort before relaxing at the Forest Spa, where warm outdoor pools and Finnish saunas are surrounded by snow-covered forest.

The evening concludes with a Nordic dinner featuring local flavours.

Optional: Take a Snowcat Adventure into the snowy wilderness, followed by a cosy campfire and rustic meal surrounded by nature.

Nature, wellness and Nordic flavours, all at the top.

Day 6 *Kuopio*
Farewell to Finland

After breakfast, continue to Kuopio and visit the iconic Puijo Tower for panoramic views across snow-covered forests and lakes, followed by a lunch featuring local flavours.

Depending on the departure schedule, additional experiences can be arranged before continuing home by train or flight.

Leave Finland with memories of Three Peaks, snowy wilderness, Finnish sauna, Karelian traditions, Arctic adventures and the peaceful magic of the North.

DURATION
6 days / 5 nights

VALIDITY
winter 2027–28 and 28–29 on request basis

GROUP SIZE
from 15 pax to 50 pax

INCLUSIONS
5 nights accommodation on BB basis, all transfers according to the programme, 2 lunches, 4 dinners, 1 Karelian festive dinner, refreshments served during the activities, all activities, excursions and guiding described in the programme. Free place for your tour leader in single room.

FROM PRICES (NET)
Min. 15 pax 1500 € per person / twin share
Min. 20 pax 1400 € per person / twin share
Min. 30 pax 1275 € per person / twin share
Min. 40 pax 1225 € per person / twin share
Single room supplement available on request.

ARRIVAL POINT
Joensuu airport or train station

DEPARTURE
Kuopio Airport or train station

DISTANCES

Joensuu Airport – Koli	1 hr
Koli – Puu-Juuka	0,5 hrs
Puu-Juuka – Bomba	45 mins
Bomba – Vuokatti	1 hr
Vuokatti – Tahko	2 hrs
Tahko – Kuopio	1 hr

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
info@samimatkat.fi

New product

In the heart of Karelia

ESCORTED SINGLE CENTRE GROUP TOUR TO JOENSUU

Karelian culture

Nature & wellbeing

Easy day excursions & one-hotel stay







EXPERIENCE THE HEART OF KARELIA

ITINERARY

Explore the culture, nature, history and flavours of North Karelia through a selection of guided day excursions while enjoying the comfort of a one-hotel stay in Joensuu.

Day 1 Welcome to Joensuu

Arrival in Joensuu by air or rail. Check in to the award-winning Lietsu Boutique Aparthotel, located in the heart of the city.

Settle into your charming Karelian-inspired accommodation and enjoy a welcome dinner featuring local flavours.

Day 2 The Heart of Karelia

After a traditional Karelian breakfast, discover Joensuu on a guided walking tour introducing the city's history, architecture and local way of life.

Following lunch at Lietsu, visit the Orthodox Cultural Centre and Seminary Church for a guided introduction to the rich traditions of Eastern Orthodox culture, an important part of North Karelia's heritage.

The day concludes with a traditional Karelian dinner featuring local specialities.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND | LIETSU DMC

WE SPEAK GAY

Day 3 Explore North Karelia

Choose one of four fascinating full-day excursions showcasing different sides of North Karelia. Day trip includes a warm meal.

Option 1 | Ilomantsi – The Soul of Karelia
Travel to Finland's easternmost municipality and experience authentic Karelian culture. Visit Hermanni Winery & Distillery for a guided tour and tasting of locally crafted berry wines. Continue to Parppeinvaara Rune Singer's Village to discover Karelian traditions, stories and kantele music, and enjoy a traditional Karelian feast at Parppeinpirtti Restaurant.

Option 2 | Valamo Monastery
Discover Valamo Monastery, Finland's most renowned Orthodox monastery and a unique spiritual and cultural destination. Explore the monastery church, museum and exhibitions before enjoying lunch at Restaurant Trapesa. The afternoon includes a guided visit to the monastery winery and distillery with a tasting of selected products.

Option 3 | North Karelia Through History
Visit the war history museum located in the former Kontioranta garrison area and gain insights into regional history. Continue to historic Venejoen Mylly, where the mill hostess shares stories of the old watermill over coffee and local pastries.

Option 4 | Wild Food & Heavy Metal
Experience two of North Karelia's most unexpected exports. Visit the Nightwish Story Exhibition Centre in Kitee and discover the story behind Finland's world-famous symphonic metal band. Continue to Tohmajärvi for a wild food experience showcasing local ingredients, followed by a traditional Finnish sauna and outdoor hot tub surrounded by nature.

Day 4 Nature & Finnish Wellbeing

Nature is never far away in Joensuu. After breakfast, join a local nature guide for an excursion to the lakeside countryside surrounding the city. Enjoy an authentic Karelian outdoor meal prepared over an open fire and learn about local nature traditions. During winter, guests also have the opportunity to try ice fishing.

The experience concludes with a Nature-Based Stress Recovery session inspired by the Finnish connection to nature and wellbeing. Dinner is served at Lietsu Hotel.

Optional: Finnish sauna and ice swimming experience (winter only).

Day 5 Arts, Gardens & Local Life

Following breakfast, choose between a handicraft workshop at Taitokortteli Arts & Crafts Centre or a guided visit to Museum Eliel, exploring the history and identity of North Karelia.

Enjoy free time in Joensuu city centre before visiting Botania Art Garden, a unique destination combining tropical nature, art and immersive experiences. A guided tour and farewell dinner are enjoyed in the garden surroundings.

Day 6 Departure

After breakfast, departure from Joensuu by air or rail.

DURATION 6 days / 5 nights
VALIDITY available year-round
GROUP SIZE 15 pax on request basis

INCLUSIONS
5 nights accommodation and breakfast, with meals, guided activities and transportations described in the programme.

FROM PRICE
For 15–25 pax 990 € pp / twin share
For 26–40 pax 890 € pp / twin share

Single supplement from 150 €

Extra days including accommodation and a day trip +145 € pp / twin share

Day trip option 4: Wild food and heavy metal +100 € pp

ARRIVAL POINT Joensuu

TRANSFER TIMES

Joensuu airport – hotel	15 min by bus
Joensuu railway station – hotel	10 min on foot
Joensuu – Ilomantsi	1 hr
Joensuu Valamo	1 hr
Joensuu Kontiolahti	30 min
Joensuu Kitee/Tohmajärvi	1 hr

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES ON REQUEST
- Cruise on a river (May – Sept.)
- Guided seasonal nature tours and activities
- The Joensuu City Orchestra concert (Sept. – May)
- Finnish theatre experience

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
dmc@lietsuhotel.fi

Lietsu Boutique Aparthotel
Top 3 nomination for Best hotel at Finnish Travel Gala 2026

Lietsu Boutique Aparthotel
Karelia à la carte company of the year 2025

On the frozen lake

seal themed week on a Saimaa island

NORTHERN SAIMAA

Holiday with a purpose



Relax in a cottage



Discover the Magic of Winter by Lake Saimaa



SEAL-THEMED WEEKS ON A SAIMAA ISLAND

ITINERARY

Join us on a frozen island in Lake Saimaa for an unforgettable winter experience that blends nature, science, and conservation. Available from mid-January to mid-February, you'll spend a week (Friday to Friday) at Villa Raita, learning about the endangered Saimaa seal and helping create life-saving artificial snow nests.

Each week includes:

- Outdoor adventures on the frozen lake
- Snowshoeing, kicksled tours, and workshops
- Insightful sessions on seal biology and conservation
- A chance to contribute to real nature protection efforts

If weather prevents nest-building, you'll take part in a unique regenerative tourism workshop combining art and science – an award-winning experience by Karelia Cottages.

POHJOIS-KARJALAN BIOSFÄÄRIALUE
North Karelia Biosphere Reserve

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

Day 1 **Welcome to Villa Raita**

Settle in, meet your group, and learn the essentials: lighting the wood burner, making an ice hole, and diving into the science behind the Saimaa seal. Brave the icy lake for a refreshing dip – just like a seal!

Days 2–6 **Explore, Learn, Contribute**

Your week unfolds with guided and independent activities shaped by weather and your interests:

- Build snow nests to help endangered seals
- Snowshoe or kicksled through pristine nature trails
- Enjoy campfire picnics and explore ancient Saimaa bedrock
- Visit wetlands, learn about local conservation efforts, and meet inspiring locals
- Join creative workshops: broom-making, baking, music, and more

Day 7 **Reflection & Relaxation**

Wrap up with a warm meal, shared stories, and a sense of accomplishment.

Day 8 **Departure**

Leave with memories, new skills, and the joy of having made a difference.

I ♡ SAIMAA RINGED SEAL
Let's keep the seal on the rock

ECEAT Suomi

DURATION
8 days / 7 nights

VALIDITY
Mid-Jan to mid-Feb 2027–2029.
Please contact Karelia Cottages for exact dates 2027, 2028 and 2029.

INCLUSIONS
7 nights accommodation on full board basis, volunteering for seal protection and other activities as mentioned.

FROM PRICE
2008 € per person based on 4 people sharing a cottage

ARRIVAL POINT
Joensuu

TRANSFER TIMES
Joensuu – Karelia Cottages 60 km

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
katri.vuorjoki@kareliacottages.fi

North Karelian

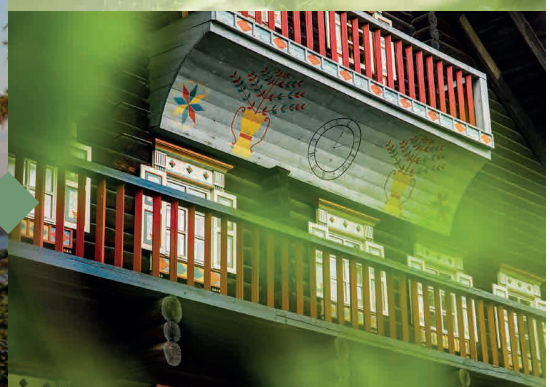
Adventure self drive

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 Hermanni wine tower for magnificent views and a taste of local berry wines and Parppeinpirtti, one of the best preserved Karelian buildings. Your accommodation is at Möhkön Rajakartano, a charming guesthouse in Möhkö village, the easternmost village in Finland.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL 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 2027–2029
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)
1390 € pp in a twin

ARRIVAL POINT
Joensuu airport or train station

DISTANCES
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

Korvenkota smoke sauna
Best sauna in Finland 2024

Venejoen Piilo
Best accommodation in the Nordics 2025, Scandinavian outdoor travel awards

Äksyt Ämmät
Top 3 nominee for best specialist tour operator in Finland in 2026 (Finnish Travel Gala)

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.

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 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 pasties like *vatruska, sultsina, supikas*, and *pyörö* in the afternoon.

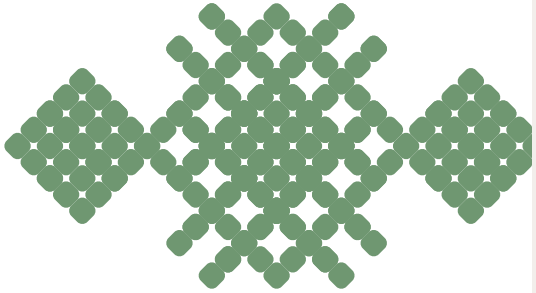
Day 6 **Seasonal Preserves and Flavors: Marmalades, Jams, and More**

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**



SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND | ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT DMC

DURATION 8 days / 7 nights

VALIDITY
Departures in 2027:
15–22 May
17–24 Oct
For 2028 and 2029, similar dates will be available, please contact Äksyt Ämmät for exact dates.

MINIMUM PAX AMOUNT 4 pax

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

FROM PRICE (GROSS PER PERSON ON TWIN SHARE)
1750 € pp in a twin,
single room supplement from 280 €

ARRIVAL POINT
Kuopio

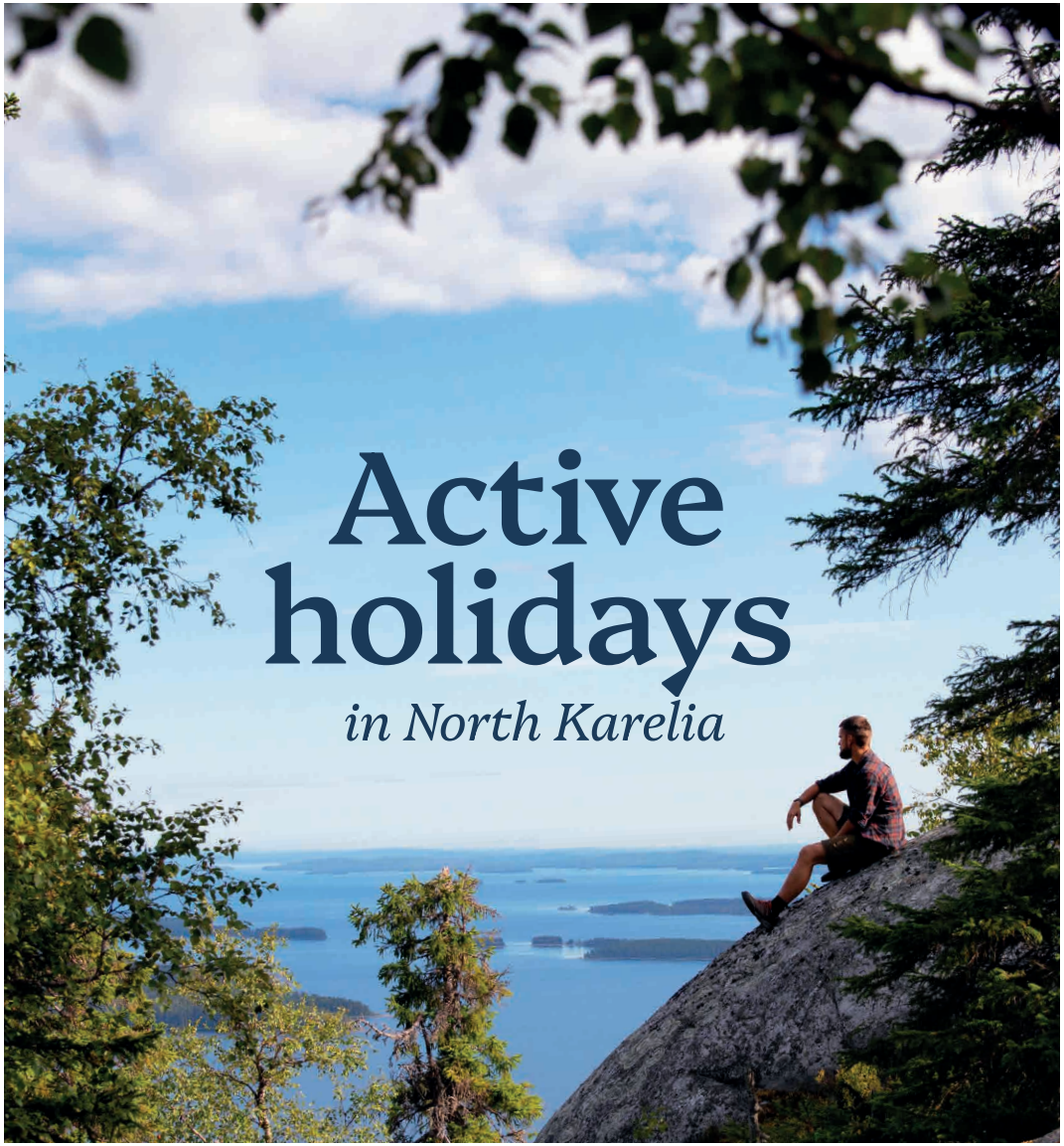
TRANSFER TIMES

Kuopio airport – Nurmes	1 hr 30 mins
Nurmes train station – Nurmes	30 mins.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
sales@aksytammat.fi

Best food tourism product
in Hungry for Finland competition 2015

Äksyt Ämmät
Top 3 nominee for best specialist tour operator in Finland in 2026
(Finnish Travel Gala)



Active holidays

in North Karelia

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND | ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT DMC



Guesthouse to guesthouse bike tour

NURMES

- **Cycle through the authentic countryside and villages of North Karelia**
- **Experience traditional guesthouse hospitality, local cuisine and lakeside saunas**

ITINERARY

Discover the peaceful landscapes of North Karelia on a self-guided cycling adventure from guesthouse to guesthouse. Cycling through charming villages, forests, lakeshores and rural countryside, you will experience the region's authentic culture, hospitality and culinary traditions. Along the way, enjoy panoramic views of Lake Pielinen, visit the historic Bomba Karelian Village and explore scenic village routes at your own pace.

The tour combines active outdoor experiences with comfortable accommodation in traditional guesthouses, where locally sourced meals and relaxing saunas await each evening. Luggage transfers between accommodations allow for carefree cycling, while flexible route options make the tour suitable for both experienced cyclists and leisure riders. Daily distances vary between 19–38 km.

DURATION 8 days / 7 nights

VALIDITY
Departures in 2027: 5–12 June • 12–19 June • 26 June–3 July • 3–10 July • 14–21 August

For 2028 and 2029, similar dates will be available. Please contact Äksyt Ämmät for exact dates.

MINIMUM PAX AMOUNT 2 pax

INCLUSIONS
Accommodation in guesthouses in double rooms with shared facilities, full board (breakfast, picnic lunch prepared from the breakfast table and dinner daily), evening sauna, city bicycle and helmet, luggage transfers between guesthouses, and return transfer from/to Nurmes railway station.

FROM PRICE (GROSS PER PERSON ON TWIN SHARE)
1500 € pp in a twin

ARRIVAL POINT Nurmes train station

TRANSFER TIMES

Joensuu airport – Nurmes	1 hr 40 mins
Kuopio airport – Nurmes	1 hr 30 mins
Nurmes train station	approx 30 mins

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
sales@aksytammat.fi

Please note: the starting guesthouse may vary depending on availability.
Cycling routes range approximately from 100–200 km in total, with flexible daily distance options

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND | ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT DMC



Paths of Silence – A Walking Tour in Finland's National Parks

NATIONAL PARKS OF KOLI,TIILIKKAJÄRVI, HIIDENPORTTI, RAESÄRKÄT AND PAALASMAA ARCHIPELAGO.

- **Experience three national parks, one nature reserve and the unique Paalasmaa archipelago**
- **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, Raesärkät and Paalasmaa archipelago, and enjoy local culture and cuisine.
The tour is suited to those with average level of fitness with daily distances between 6–15 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
Departures in 2027:
22–29 May • 29 May–5 Jun
18–25 Sep • 25 Sep–2 Oct
Other times upon request.
For 2028 and 2029 dates, please contact Äksyt Ämmät.

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 Kuopio airport.

FROM PRICE (GROSS PER PERSON ON TWIN SHARE)
1550 € person in a twin

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES
Single supplement from 280 € pp.
Additional day from 95 € pp on BB basis.

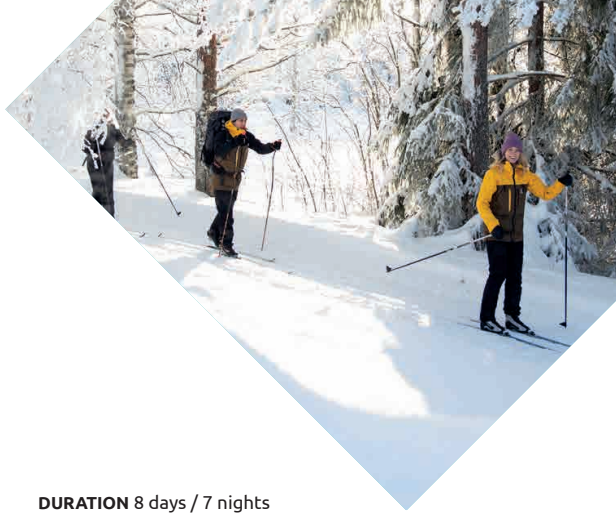
ARRIVAL POINT
Joensuu airport, Kuopio airport

TRANSFER TIMES

Joensuu airport – Nurmes	1 hr 40 mins
Kuopio airport – Nurmes	1 hr 30 mins

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
sales@aksytammat.fi

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND | ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT DMC



Ski Adventure in North Karelia

NURMES

- **Unforgettable Ski Adventure in North Karelia**
- **Crosscountry ski week for ski lovers**

ITINERARY

Experience an unforgettable skiing holiday in the wilderness of North Karelia, Finland. This guided tour combines scenic skiing adventures with authentic Finnish traditions, local delicacies, and relaxing evenings in a cozy guesthouse. Suitable for both beginners and experienced skiers, the program includes professional guidance, equipment, and a variety of outdoor activities in peaceful natural surroundings.

DURATION 8 days / 7 nights

VALIDITY
Departures in 2027:
13–20 Feb • 20–27 Feb • 27 Feb–6 Mar • 13–20 Mar
For 2028 and 2029 dates, please contact Äksyt Ämmät.

MINIMUM PAX AMOUNT 4 pax

INCLUSIONS
7 nights accommodation at guesthouse double rooms, full board, sauna every day, guidance and scheduled trips, ski equipments, scheduled transportation.

TRANSFER
By plane Helsinki – Kuopio or by train Helsinki – Siilinjärvi. One group transfer from Kuopio airport (flight at around 17:00 in Kuopio) or Siilinjärvi railway station (train at around 16:00 in Siilinjärvi). Transportation from Kuopio Airport is included in the price.

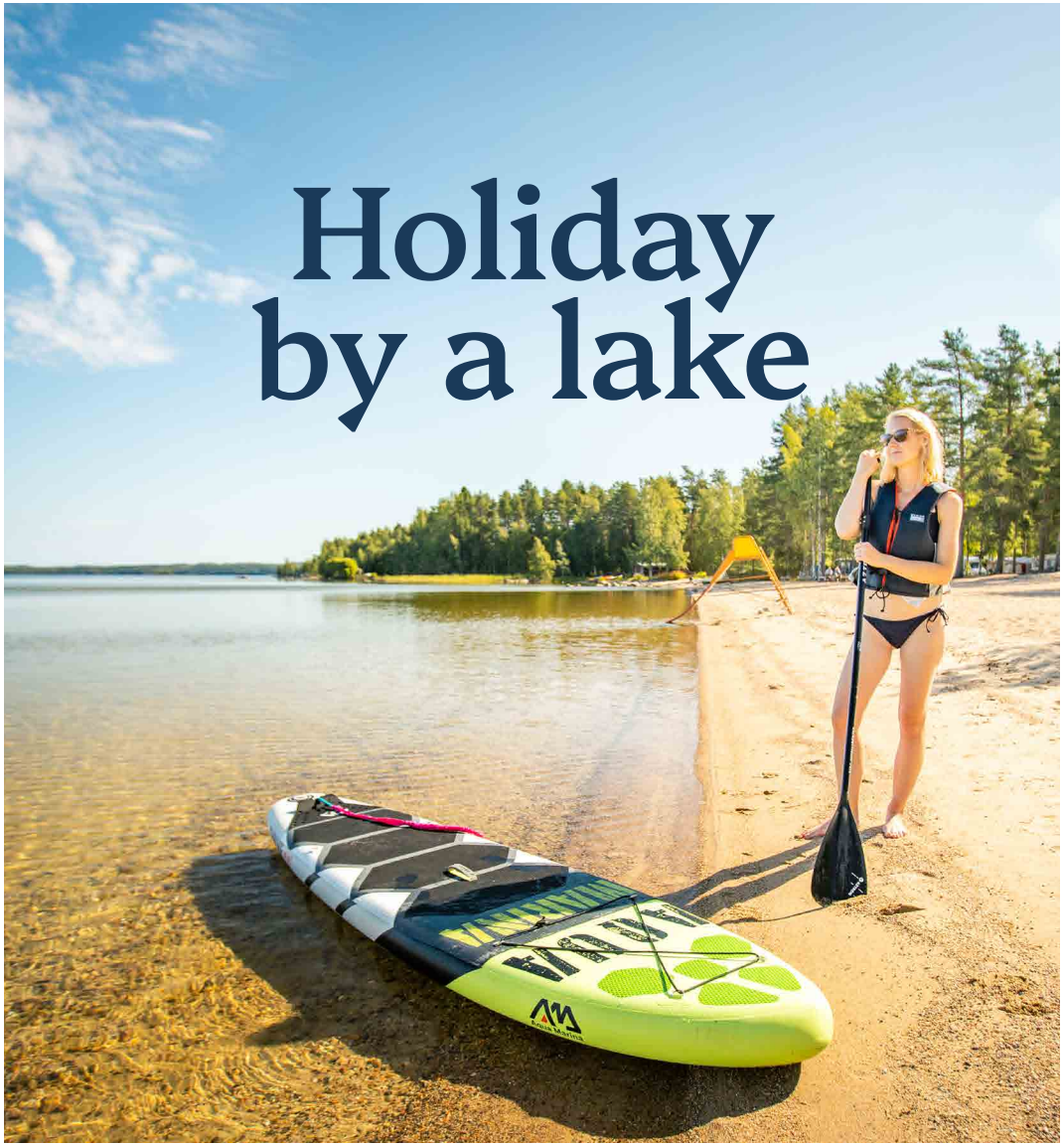
FROM PRICE (GROSS PER PERSON IN TWIN SHARE)
1790 € pp in a twin.
Single room supplement +40€/day.

ARRIVAL POINT
Kuopio Airport, Nurmes or Siilinjärvi train station

TRANSFER TIMES

Kuopio airport – Nurmes	1 hr 30 mins,
Nurmes train station	approx 30 mins
Siilinjärvi train station	approx 1,5 hrs.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
sales@aksytammat.fi



Holiday by a lake

Cottage by Lake Saimaa at Ruoke Holiday Village



KITEE (LAKE PURUVESI)

- **Enjoy cottage (*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 2027–2029
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

DISTANCES
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 board rental**
  from 25 € pp for 2 hrs

Stay on a private island

RÄÄKKYLÄ (LAKE SAIMAA)



- **Spend a year-round relaxing week in an island idyll**
- **Contribute to conservation and help the Saimaa seal**
- **Experience local culture and Karelian heritage**

ITINERARY

Stay in a modern, accessible, Karelian-style cottage on your own private island in the stunning Northern Saimaa lake district. With a private road connecting the island to the mainland, you can easily explore the beautiful surroundings at your own pace.

Enjoy swimming in the summer and forest walks in the fall, or embrace the magic of a snowy winter. Relax by the lakeside sauna and experience the unique peace of the Finnish wilderness, all year round.

DURATION 8 days / 7 nights*
VALIDITY Jun–Sep 2027–29*
MINIMUM PAX AMOUNT 2 pax, max 6 pax.*

INCLUSIONS
7 nights stay on self catering basis in a 2-bedroom Villa Raita 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.
*Different rates apply outside the summer season.

ARRIVAL POINT
Joensuu airport or train station

TRANSFER TIMES
Joensuu – Karelia Cottages 60 km

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
info@kareliacottages.fi

POHJOIS-KARJALAN BIOSFÄÄRIALUE
North Karelia Biosphere Reserve

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

ECEAT Suomi

Tarina-aho

KOLI (LAKE PIELINEN)



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

ITINERARY

Stay on an island resort in Lake Pielinen, surrounded by the breathtaking beauty of Koli National Park. A stay at Tarina-aho Resort is like stepping back in time: slow down, breathe in the fresh forest air, and enjoy the simple pleasures of life. Spend your days relaxing in a traditional Finnish sauna, swimming in the clear lake, exploring peaceful nature trails, and dining in our cozy bistro.

Here, you'll enjoy delicious meals inspired by the region, prepared with fresh local ingredients and seasonal treasures we forage ourselves, such as wild mushrooms and berries. With no schedules or distractions, your only task is to enjoy the moment.

DURATION 4 days / 3 nights
VALIDITY Jun–Sep 2027–2029
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

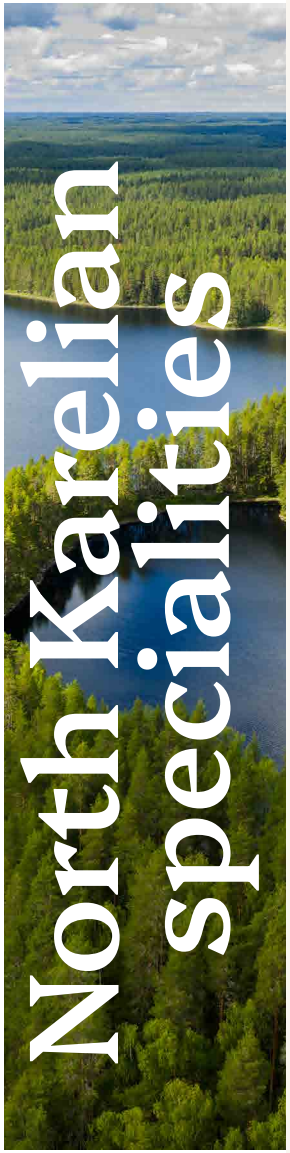
FROM PRICE (NET PER PERSON ON TWIN SHARE)
689 € pp in a twin

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





Puu-Juuka

JUUKA

- **Stay in a beautifully restored historic wooden village**
- **Experience authentic Karelian cultural heritage and hospitality**
- **Perfectly located near Koli National Park and Lake Pielinen**

ITINERARY

Stay in a beautifully restored wooden village and experience authentic Karelian cultural heritage. Located just 30 minutes from Koli National Park, Puu-Juuka combines history, comfort and genuine Karelian hospitality in a truly unique setting.

Guests are accommodated in charming late 19th and early 20th century wooden buildings, where original architectural details have been carefully preserved. Surrounded by lakes and scenic hill landscapes, Puu-Juuka offers a peaceful base for travelers seeking culture, nature and relaxation.

DURATION 1–7 nights or upon request
AVAILABILITY Year-round
MINIMUM GROUP SIZE 1 person

FROM PRICE
120 € per person

OPTIONAL EXCURSION
Wine Tasting at Hotel Puu-Juuka
from 35 € pp

ARRIVAL
Joensuu Airport or
Joensuu Railway Station

TRANSFER TIMES
Joensuu – Juuka approx. 1 hour,
Juuka – Koli approx. 30 minutes

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
sales@puujuuka.fi



By steam to the heart of Karelia

JOENSUU-NURMES-JOENSUU

- **Historic Steam Train**
- **Scenic Rail Journey**
- **Bomba & Karelia**

ITINERARY

Experience a journey where the train ride is part of the adventure. Travel aboard a historic steam train through the beautiful landscapes of North Karelia to Nurmes and the authentic Karelian surroundings of Bomba. Combining railway heritage, local culture and slow travel, this unique two-day experience offers a memorable glimpse into Finland's past and present.

The journey unfolds over two memorable days, beginning in Joensuu aboard a historic steam train. Relax and enjoy approximately four hours of scenic rail travel through forests, lakes and rural villages while live music, local storytelling and onboard dining create a truly nostalgic atmosphere. Upon arrival in Nurmes, spend the evening and overnight immersed in the warm Karelian hospitality of Bomba before returning to Joensuu by steam train the following day.

DURATION 2 days / 1 night
VALIDITY April–October 2027–29
MINIMUM PAX AMOUNT 80 pax

INCLUSIONS
Specially chartered return steam train from Joensuu to Nurmes and back.
Overnight in Bomba at extra cost.
The programme can be tailored to suit different group interests and schedules

FROM PRICE
150 € per person

ARRIVAL POINT
Joensuu train station

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
support@reissujuna.fi

OPTIONAL
Guests looking for a premium railway experience can upgrade to a historic first-class sleeping carriage, adding an extra touch of comfort and nostalgia to the journey. Upgrade to 1st class overnight cabin from 50 € pp.

Valamo Monastery Retreat

VALAMO



- **Experience life at an active monastery in the heart of Finnish Lakeland**
- **Discover centuries of tradition, architecture, art and history**
- **Enjoy lakeside trails, tranquil surroundings and delicious monastery cuisine**

ITINERARY

Spend three peaceful days in the unique surroundings of Valamo Monastery, nestled amid forests and lakes in the heart of Finnish Lakeland. Valamo offers a perfect balance of relaxation, culture and nature. During your stay, enjoy comfortable accommodation, traditional monastery breakfasts and local cuisine while experiencing the peaceful rhythm of monastic life.

Explore the monastery church, museum and art exhibition, walk along scenic lakeside trails, and discover the rich heritage of Orthodox Christianity in Finland. Whether joining a guided tour, attending a service, or simply enjoying the silence, Valamo offers a unique opportunity to slow down and reconnect with nature, culture and yourself.

DURATION 3 days / 2 nights
VALIDITY June–August 2027 and 2028
MINIMUM PAX AMOUNT 2 pax

INCLUSIONS
2 nights' accommodation in a twin room, monastery breakfasts, guided monastery tour, entrance to the Monastery Museum, entrance to the art exhibition, monastery buffet lunch

FROM PRICE (NET PER PERSON ON TWIN SHARE)
162 €/pp in a twin room

OPTIONAL EXTRA
Private lakeside sauna experience (summer season only)

ARRIVAL POINT
Joensuu Airport or Joensuu Railway Station

TRANSFER TIME
Joensuu – Valamo Monastery 65 km (approx. 1 hour by car)

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
myyntipalvelu@valamo.fi

Valamo Monastery is committed to developing sustainable tourism and is currently working towards the Sustainable Travel Finland certification.

Wildlife observation

LIEKSA



- **Observe bears, wolverines and wolves**
- **Overnight in the heart of the wilderness**
- **Authentic wildlife experience in North Karelia**

ITINERARY

Your wildlife adventure begins at Keljänpuro Lodge, where you are welcomed with refreshments and a briefing introducing the observation experience and the wildlife of the region.

In the afternoon, transfer to the observation log cabin located on a hillside overlooking a forest pond and the surrounding old-growth spruce forest. As dusk settles over the wilderness, enjoy a unique opportunity to observe Finland's large carnivores in their natural habitat. Summer evenings and nights are filled with anticipation, as every observation is different.

The area is particularly renowned for its wolverines, which attract wildlife enthusiasts and photographers from around the world. From the cabin, it is possible to observe wolverines, along with bears and occasionally wolves, at remarkably close range. Light snacks are provided during the evening. Spend the night in spacious observation log cabin, immersed in the sights of the northern wilderness. The comfortable observation log cabin is equipped with beds, allowing guests to rest or sleep during the night.

The following morning, return to Keljänpuro Lodge with unforgettable memories of North Karelia's wild nature.

DURATION 18 hours
VALIDITY May–Sep 2027–2029
MIN PAX AMOUNT 2 pax

FROM PRICE (NET PER PERSON)
225 €/pp
(+ transport from/to Lieksa 60 €/way)

ARRIVAL POINT
Keljänpuro Lodge or Lieksa train station

TRANSFER TIMES
From Lieksa 30 min by car

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKING
info@eraeero.com

POHJOIS-KARJALAN BIOSFÄÄRIALUE
North Karelia Biosphere Reserve

North Karelia Biosphere Reserve's sustainable development partner **Erä-Eero**

Unique Adventures

in North Karelia

EXPLORE SOME OF OUR MOST UNIQUE PRODUCTS AND PLACES TO VISIT, ONLY AVAILABLE IN NORTH KARELIA.

Venejoen Piilo

Unique accommodation in North Karelia



Venejoen Piilo is a small and unique accommodation village in the wilderness of North Karelia. Here you can escape from everyday life and enjoy nature: Koli, primeval forests, two lakes, and a wide range of activities. Everything has been implemented in a sustainable manner in cooperation with the locals. Piilo is located in an excellent location, less than half an hour from Joensuu Airport and Koli. Welcome to discover either adventures in nature or much-needed peace and quiet.

For more information, please visit:
venejoenpiilo.com/en

Best accommodation in the Nordics 2025

Puukarin Pysäkki

Karelian Guesthouse & Restaurant



Join in for a Karelian food and guesthouse experience in Valtimo. Puukarin Pysäkki is a small, personal guesthouse in the heart of North Karelia. Here, Karelian food, local traditions, nature and warm hospitality come together around the table. Hosted by chef and storyteller Anni Inkeri Korhonen, Puukari offers authentic food experiences, cooking together, local ingredients, Finnish sauna and the quiet beauty of the countryside. Come to learn, taste and experience Karelian food and culture – and slow down for a while.

For more information, please visit:
anniinkerikorhonen.fi/puukari

House of Bear

Spiritual and Cultural Journeys in Karelia



Experience a different side of Finland through transformative journeys inspired by Karelian traditions, nature and ancient wisdom. From lakeside retreats and sauna rituals to guided nature experiences and local gastronomy, North Karelia offers opportunities for reflection, renewal and a deeper connection with the surrounding landscape. One of the region's most distinctive experiences is House of Bear's Sacred Journey around Lake Pielinen, a multi-day pilgrimage combining nature, culture and wellbeing.

For more information, please visit:
karhuntalo.com/en/english

Best Product in the Nordics 2025

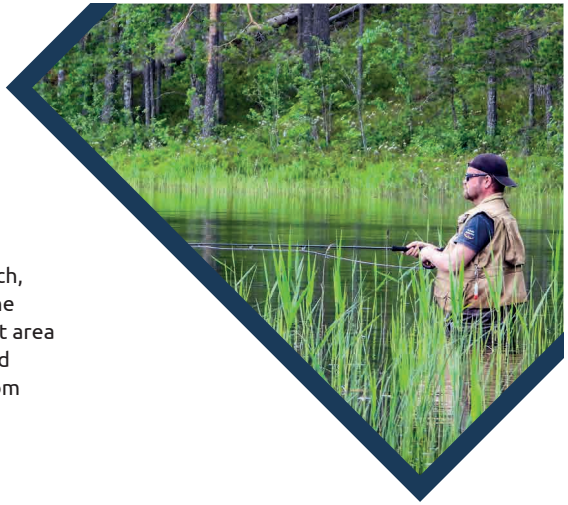
Ilomantsi battlegrounds trail



Ilomantsi, the only Finnish municipality with major battles in 1939–44, offers a 150 km Battlegrounds Trail. Along it, visitors find memorials, museums, information boards, and restored positions that illustrate the area's unique wartime history.

For more information, please visit:
sotatie.fi/en

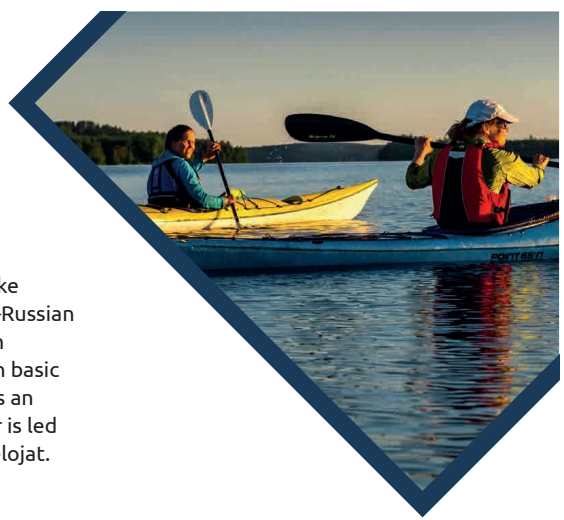
Rent your own lake



Musta Mäntyjärvi, a 40-hectare forest lake in North Karelia, offers exclusive fishing and relaxation for your group. With pike and perch, kayaks, and a peaceful motor-free setting, the package includes transport, permits, and rest area use. Extras like guided tours, meals, gear, and a tent sauna are available. Located 95 km from Joensuu near Patvinsuo and Ruunaa.

For more information, please visit:
kalastusretket.fi/en/rentalake

Kayaking on the borderzone



A unique 3–4 hour guided canoe trip on Lake Pyhäjärvi takes paddlers up to the Finnish–Russian border. Covering about 8 km, the excursion includes breaks and is suited for those with basic canoeing experience. Group size is 3–5 plus an instructor, with an age limit of 15. The tour is led by trained instructors from Kesälahden Melojat.

For more information, please visit:
lakelandkarelia.fi

Hermanni vineyard



Hermanni Winery, Finland's oldest winery, invites visitors to discover the flavours of the North through wines, sparkling wines and spirits crafted from pure Finnish berries. Located in Ilomantsi, this pioneer of Arctic berry wines offers memorable tasting and visitor experiences in the heart of North Karelia.

Hermanni Winery was recently named among the World's Top 50 Wine Tourism Destinations, the only destination in Northern Europe to earn a place on the prestigious list. This recognition highlights its unique blend of Finnish berry wines, local culture and distinctive visitor experiences.

For more information, please visit: hermannin.fi

Events & more



Gravel biking events

Koli Gravel Carnival 29 May 2027
Sorahiisi Gravel Biking Event August 2027

Join these friendly gravel bike events in Koli and cycle in some of the best and most scenic roads of Finland. Distances vary from 40 to 320 km and also include themed rides such as Sunset drive.



Kontiolahti World Cup Biathlon

Kontiolahti
7–12 Dec 2027

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 or in Joensuu.

Sustainability certificate
EcoCompass environmental management system

Lieksa Brass Week

Lieksa
23–31 Jul 2027

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



East Finland Wool Festival

Nurmes
21–22 Aug 2027

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.



Koli Marathon

Koli national park
1–2 Oct 2027

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
9–11 Jul 2027

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

European Stone Festival

For the first time in Finland

Juuka
3–4 July 2027

Sculptors and festival visitors meet, interact and exchange ideas while the sculptors create an enchanting work of art inspired by Wild Nature of Finland in just 16 hours. Visitors can try sculpting themselves, watch the artwork take shape and purchase a memory to take home.



Winter garden & Visual festival

Joensuu
New Year's eve – late March 2027
Visual Festival | late November 2027

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 and check future dates at
visitkarelia.fi/en/events

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.

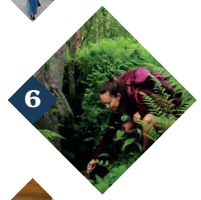


Patvinsuo National Park
Largest national park in southern Finland & habitat of bears.





Valamo and Lintula
Iconic Orthodox monasteries.



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



Parppeinvaara 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 *All taxi prices are based on 1–4 people sharing a taxi*	Train	Bus
Joensuu – Koli or vv	**155 €** journey time 1 hr		**45 € pp** on demand bus service (once a day at 12.00 from Joensuu)
Koli – Nurmes/Bomba or vv	**180 €** journey time 1 hr 5 mins		**Approx 16 € pp** one connection per day; journey time 1,5 hrs
Nurmes/Bomba – Joensuu or vv	**265 €** 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	**175 €** 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**	**175 €** journey time 1 hr 10 mins **150 €** 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	**155 €** journey time 50 mins		**18 € pp** one connection per day; journey time 1 hr 40 mins
Joensuu – Kitee or vv	**170 €** 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	**45 €** journey time 15 mins		**4 € pp** busses meet Finnair flights
	Book here myynti@meneva.fi asiakaspalvelu@kolintaksi.fi	**Book here** www.vr.fi	**For timetables, please visit** www.matkahuolto.fi/en Tickets are available from driver.

For more information, visit here: www.visitkarelia.fi/en/travel/reaching-the-destination

Sustain-ability

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.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND

For more information, visit
dmo.visitkarelia.fi/en/sustainable-travel



unesco Biosphere Reserve

POHJOIS-KARJALAN BIOSFÄÄRIALUE
North Karelia Biosphere Reserve

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

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



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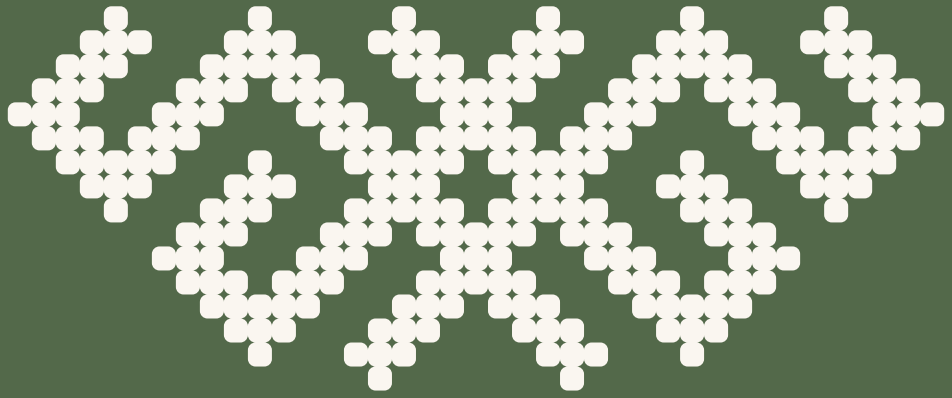
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PEFC
PEFC/02-31-151

Printed on
eco-friendly paper.

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