

## The charming Southern Finland 2020



Being a country of abundant forests, until the last century the houses of Finland were built mainly of wood. Today the landscape is still dotted with entire wooden villages that have remained almost intact for decades or even centuries. A visit to one of these historical places is like taking a trip to Finland's past. In this beautiful region of the south we will visit 4 of the 7 sites with the title of UNESCO World Heritage Site that Finland has.

It should also be noted that Finland is a true nation of design. Finnish design icons such as **Marimekko** and **Iittala**, which we will visit on our trip, are still adored throughout the world, while a whole new generation of young and innovative designers are also taking over the scene.

All this is found in the lovely southern Finland!

### Day 1 - Helsinki

Arrival in Helsinki, capital of Finland. Meeting with the English-speaking guide.  
Panoramic visit of the city of Helsinki.  
Dinner and night in Helsinki.

### Day 2- Helsinki - Hanko - Fiskars - Turku

In the morning departure to **Turku**.

On the way we will visit Hanko, the southernmost city of Finland. The history of this city dates back to the thirteenth century. The Hanko Peninsula has been the scene of wars, battles, reflected in the ruins that prove it. Something very interesting to see are the stones engraved by sailors while they waited in the area. Some of them date from the 15th century.

Later we will continue to **Fiskars**. Founded in 1649 and best known for the iconic orange-handled scissors designed in 1967, Fiskars is a destination not to be missed by art lovers, foodies.

After a lunch break we will continue to **Turku**, the oldest city in Finland as well as the ancient capital of the country, maintaining its capital status until 1812. Turku can boast one of the most beautiful wood-built neighbourhoods in the country. Located in the neighbourhood known as **Portsa**, these charming historic wooden houses separated by narrow cobbled streets are located just west of the river **Aura**, which runs through the city centre. We will also visit the two main monuments, the Cathedral and the Castle. Located on the central **Unikankare** hill, one of the seven that dominate the city, **Turku Cathedral**, of sober stamp and marked German Gothic style, is considered the great jewel of the country.

Walking along the banks of the river **Aura** until its mouth we will arrive at the imposing **Turku Castle**. Royal palace, jail, warehouse, military headquarters... Several functions have been performed by this symbol of **Turku** the walls of which contain moments of glory, such as those lived under the mandate of **King John III**

of Sweden, assaults and devastating fires.  
Free time.  
Night in Turku

### Day 3- Turku -Rauma - Noormarkku - Tampere

After breakfast we will depart towards Tampere.

We will stop in **Rauma**. Its medieval layout of cobbled and winding streets and narrow alleys are intertwined with the wooden houses of the Nordic Classicism of the 19th century. It is one of the few places in Finland considered a *World Heritage Site by Unesco*.

A stop at the **Sammallahdenmaki** burial site, this Bronze Age site features more than 30 granite burial mounds, which provides a unique insight into funeral practices, and the social and religious structures of northern Europe more than three millennia ago, *UNESCO World Heritage Site*.

A stop in **Noormarkku**. The Noormarkku factories, also known as Ahlström, is one of the largest and most impressive industrial areas of Finland's old factories. The buildings in the area are heated with wood chips from the surrounding forest, while two generators in the hydroelectric plant provide clean energy. According to Ahlström's values, traditions and care for the environment are appreciated. For the art and architecture enthusiasts there is Villa Mairea, designed by Alvar and Aino Aalto. Noormarkku Club is a restaurant awarded by the Rôtisseurs, specializing in local food with wild foods. We recommend taking a lunch break.

We continue to Tampere. Arrival and accommodation.

Tampere is the world capital of saunas because there are more public saunas here than anywhere else in the world. The historical jewel is the **Rajaportti Sauna**, which is the oldest public sauna in the country in operation - since 1906 - located in the historically working-class district of Pispala. Tampere rests on the slope of an ancient glacial ridge. What once was low-cost housing for factory workers and artists, is now a high-level residential area, where many famous artists and Finns have lived. Near the highest point on the hill is a monument to the Finnish poet Lauri Viita.

The Tower of the Bullets, symbol of the city, invites us to enjoy the views of the city.

This city is mainly industrial, partly due to Scot James Finlayson, a Scottish man who arrived in Tampere around 1820 and founded a textile workshop next to the river, also highlighted by the Romanesque architectural style Cathedral. In the city we can also find more than 30 museums, including the Moomin Museum, the funny white hippo created by the Finnish artist Tove Jansson.

Night in Tampere.

### Day 4 - Tampere- Hameenlinna

In the morning departure to Hameenlinna.

We will stop at Iittala, first we will visit the glass factory where you can learn the techniques of glass blowing and blow your own glass article. You will also see how the modern glass factory works in production.

The **Iittala design museum** presents the history of the world famous glass factory and the important tools and techniques for blowing. The exhibition also has a collection of the best Hackman cutlery and Pro Arte glass pieces from the Nuutajärvi glass factories.

Visit to the Kultasuklaa chocolate factory and tasting different flavors.

Then we continue to **Riihimäki**. Guided tour of the Glass Museum of Finland, which is a national specialty of the glass industry. Throughout the beautiful permanent exhibition special international and Finnish exhibitions and more than 2000 pieces of glass are changed. Guided walking tour next to the factory in the beautiful "quarters of the cabin", an old neighborhood of glass workers that still retains the culture of glass blowing in these old preserved houses.

Continuation, arrival and accommodation.

Night in Hameenlinna

### Day 5- Hameenlinna

Today we will dedicate the day to touring this beautiful city, the birthplace of the famous composer **Jean Sibelius**, who was born here in 1865. The house is a beautiful imperial style building that shows some amazing data and artifacts from Jean Sibelius's childhood. We will also visit the **Häme Castle** (13th century), the Prison Museum and the Military Museum in front of the castle.

Then we will take a walk through the famous **Aulanko Park** to enjoy the nature of the place.

Rest of the afternoon free.

Night in Hameenlinna

#### Day 6- Hameenlinna - Lahti - Verla -Porvoo - Helsinki

In the morning departure to Helsinki.

On the way we will visit the **Verla wood and cardboard treatment factory**. It is a unique small-scale industrial complex from the early years of the Finnish wood processing industry. Within its rural environment, the area includes mills, power plants and workers' housing.

In the morning departure to **Porvoo**. Founded almost 800 years ago, Porvoo is the second oldest city in Finland and evidence of its long history can still be seen and felt while walking through its charming streets. For centuries, the city has served as a home and a source of inspiration for many Finnish artists.

Located about 50 kilometers east of Helsinki, Porvoo is not exactly a coastal city, it is connected to the Gulf of Finland through the Porvoo River. The river flows through the city, passing through the most famous places in Porvoo: its houses on the red coast. Originally, the houses on the coast were painted red in honor of the arrival of Gustav III, the king of Sweden.

Historically, Porvoo has been an important center of commerce and houses on the coast were used to store goods and products, such as exotic delicacies from distant lands.

Continuation to Helsinki. Here we can also enjoy the neighborhoods of wooden houses. Designed following the movement of garden cities from England with private plots for all tenants, these areas were built in the 1900s to improve the lives of city workers working in the industry. At present they are very attractive areas for bohemians: artists, actors, writers and musicians.

We continue to Helsinki, where we will visit the **Suomenlinna Fortress**. Built in the mid-18th century, when Finland was part of the Swedish kingdom, formed on a group of islands located at the entrance to the port of Helsinki, this fortress is an interesting example of European military architecture of the time.

Night in Helsinki.

#### Day 7 - Helsinki

In the morning we will enjoy the Design District of Helsinki. We will start by visiting the **Design Museum**. Its permanent collection offers a concise and complete history of Finnish design that will take you from the pioneers of the late 19th century to Alvar Aalto - the father of Finnish modernism - to the present of design in Finland. Then we will visit **Marimekko**. This flagship store shows the essentials for living a simple, functional and aesthetic life, and like all Finnish design, they open a window to the Finnish soul.

Rest of the afternoon free.

Night in Helsinki.

#### Day 8 - Helsinki

Private transfer to the airport at the agreed time.

*This is a tailor-made tour. Consult price and let us know departure dates that will fit your needs.*