



Visit Karelia

Product Manual

FOR THE TRAVEL TRADE 2026-2027



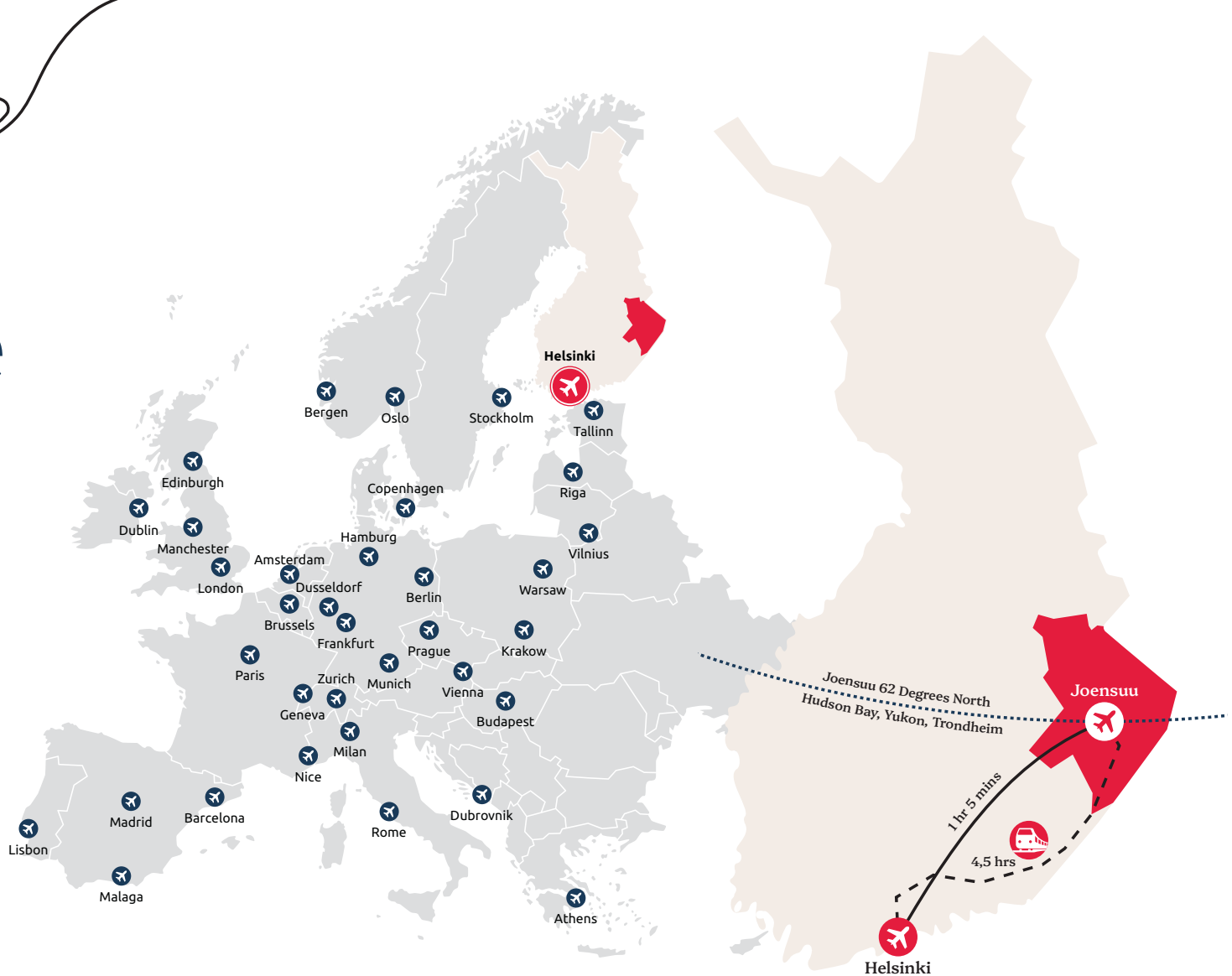
Welcome to North Karelia

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.

Come and experience North Karelia, the Soul of Finland!

VisitKarelia team



All prices are correct as of Sep 2025 and are subject to change without prior notice.

8

reasons to visit North Karelia



Experience
snowfilled winter
in Koli & Bomba
(pages 12-13)



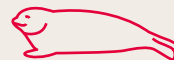
Stay in unique
accommodation
(pages 16-17 and 24)



Experience local
Karelian culture
(pages 7, 9, 11,
13, 17, 19)



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



Holiday with a
purpose to conserve
the Saimaa seal
(pages 14-15)



Taste, forage and
learn to make
local delicacies
(pages 18-19
and 21)



Live like a local
and enjoy sauna &
'mökki' by a lake
(pages 22-23)



Join one of our
many events
(pages 26-27)



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

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 & 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.



SOKOS  HOTELS

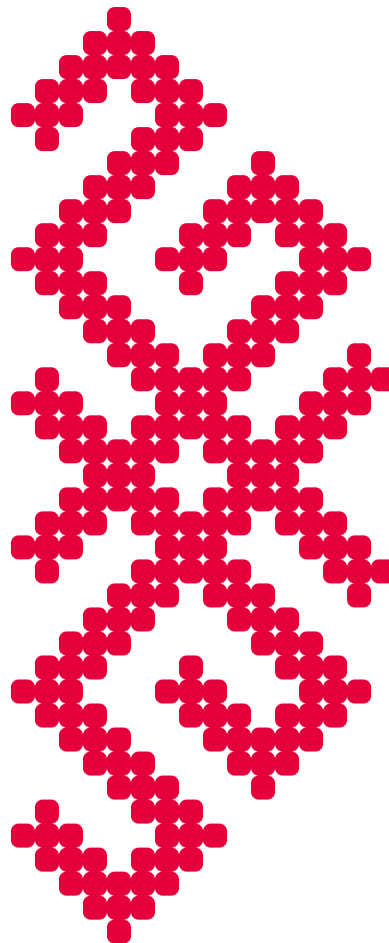
Day 3 Bomba & Karelian pastry workshop

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 & departure



Duration: 5 days / 4 nights
Validity: January-March 2026 and 2027
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. Group transfers can be organised at extra cost.

From price (net per person on twin share):

474 € 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
- **Valamo menu at Bomba House**
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

Recognitions & awards:



Bomba
The hotel of the year
award 2024, Finnish Travel Gala





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.

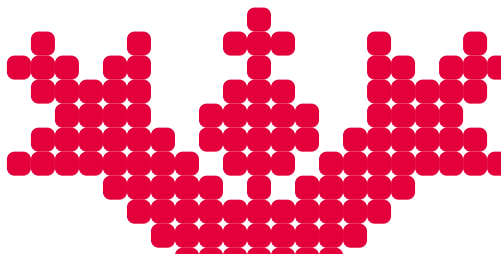
Day 4 Exploring Koli: Scenic Views, Nature Tours, and Local Stories

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:
Summer 2026 & 2027, on request basis for minimum of 20 pax.
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 1320 € pp in a twin
Min 40 pax 1260 € pp in a twin
Min 50 pax 1240 € 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

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

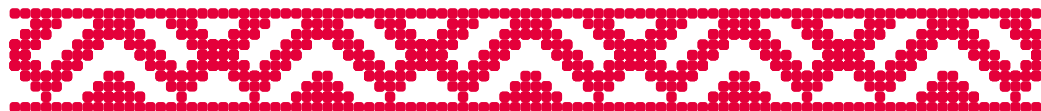
On the final day, guests check out and transfer toward Joensuu, stopping to visit Paateri, the lakeside home and atelier of sculptor Eva Ryynänen. Afterwards, guests continue to their departure point.

Duration: 7 days / 6 nights
Validity: June–September 2026 and 2027
Minimum pax amount: 10 pax
Inclusions: 6 nights accommodation with half board and guided activities as described. Transportation costs on request.
Price: €1,250 per person (20–25 pax) / €1,350 per person (10–19 pax)
Arrival point: Joensuu (airport or railway station)
Transfer times: Joensuu–Koli 1 hr, Koli–Ruunaa 1,5 hrs, Koli–Bomba 1 hr, Ruunaa–Bomba 2 hrs, Bomba–Juuka 40 min, Juuka–Joensuu 1 hr
Contact details for booking: Koli DMC, sales@koli.fi

Recognitions & awards:



Koli - Best outdoor destination
in the Nordics 2022, Scandinavian
Outdoor Travel Awards



New product

Mythical Adventure

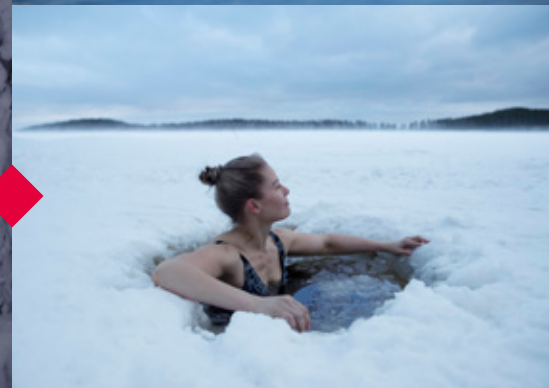
*Discover Secrets
of Finnishness*

WINTER GROUP TOUR
JOENSUU, KOLI, BOMBA

Authentic cultural
encounters &
Karelian heritage

Activities
to connect
with nature

Finnish way
of wellness



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. Guests are warmly welcomed by their Finnish–Italian guide and check in at Sokos Hotel Kimmel and enjoy a welcome dinner at Restaurant Heili.

Day 2 Journey into the Heartland

After breakfast, the group takes a guided bus and walking tour in Joensuu, followed by lunch at their own expense. In the afternoon, a transfer brings them to Koli and Break Sokos Hotel Koli. In the evening, the guide leads a Northern Lights evening walk, with an optional wool sock walk available (extra cost). Dinner is served in a traditional Kota hut by the fire before returning to the hotel.

Day 3 Mind Wandering on the Fells

The day begins with a guided walk to Koli's most beautiful peaks, followed by a visit to the Ukko Nature Centre. Guests then enjoy free time for rest and relaxation before experiencing a traditional smoke sauna. Dinner is served at the hotel.

Day 4 At the Gate of Karelia

After breakfast and check-out, the group transfers to Paateri, the home and studio of sculptor Eva Rynnänen, for a guided tour with coffee and pastry. The journey continues to Bomba, where guests check in at the hotel, join a guided walking tour of the area of its rich history, and enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Day 5 Winter Games and Quiet Happiness

The morning invites guests to experience winter activities such as ice fishing, kicksledding, or "winter fun" guided games in Bomba. In the afternoon, there is free time for personal activities, with an optional spa visit (extra expense) or snowmobile safari available. The day ends with dinner at the hotel.

Day 6 Roots and Farewell

After breakfast and check-out, guests learn the art of Karelian pie making in a hands-on workshop. The journey continues to Juuka for a guided walking tour of the old wooden riverside town, with an optional coffee break at Café Hedwig's Pearl (extra expense). In the afternoon, the group transfers back to Joensuu, checks in at Sokos Hotel Kimmel, and concludes the day with a farewell dinner at Restaurant Filipoff.

Day 7 Homeward Bound

After breakfast, the group transfers to Joensuu airport for departure.

Duration: 7 days / 6 nights
Validity: January–March 2026 and 2027
Minimum pax amount: 10 pax
Inclusions: guiding, transfers, and 6 nights accommodation with half board.
Price: €1,400 per person (20–25 pax) / €1,800 per person (10–19 pax)
Arrival point: Joensuu
Transfer times: Joensuu-Koli 1 hr, Koli – Paateri 1 hour, Paateri – Bomba 1 hour, Bomba – Juuka 40min.
Contact details for booking: Koli DMC, sales@koli.fi

Recognitions & awards:



New product

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
BIOSFAARIALUE
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.



Duration: 8 days / 7 nights

Validity:

9-16 Jan, 16-23 Jan, 23-30 Jan,
30 Jan-6 Feb, 6-13 Feb 2026 & 2027 dates TBC

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 Hermann wine tower for magnificent views and a taste of local berry wines and Parppeinpiirtti, one of the best preserved Karelian buildings. Your accommodation is at Möhkön Rajakartano, 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):
1390 € 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@aksydammat.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

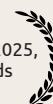
Recognitions & awards:



Korvenkota smoke sauna
Best sauna in Finland 2024



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



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.

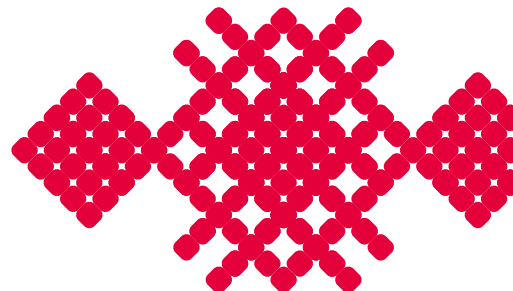
Day 6 Seasonal Preserves and Flavors: Marmalades, Jams, and More

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:

Departures in 2026:

- 2-9 May
- 9-16 May
- 10-17 Oct
- 17-24 Oct

For 2027, 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

Arrival point:

Kuopio

Transfer times:

Kuopio airport-Nurmes 1 hr 30 mins.

Contact details for booking:

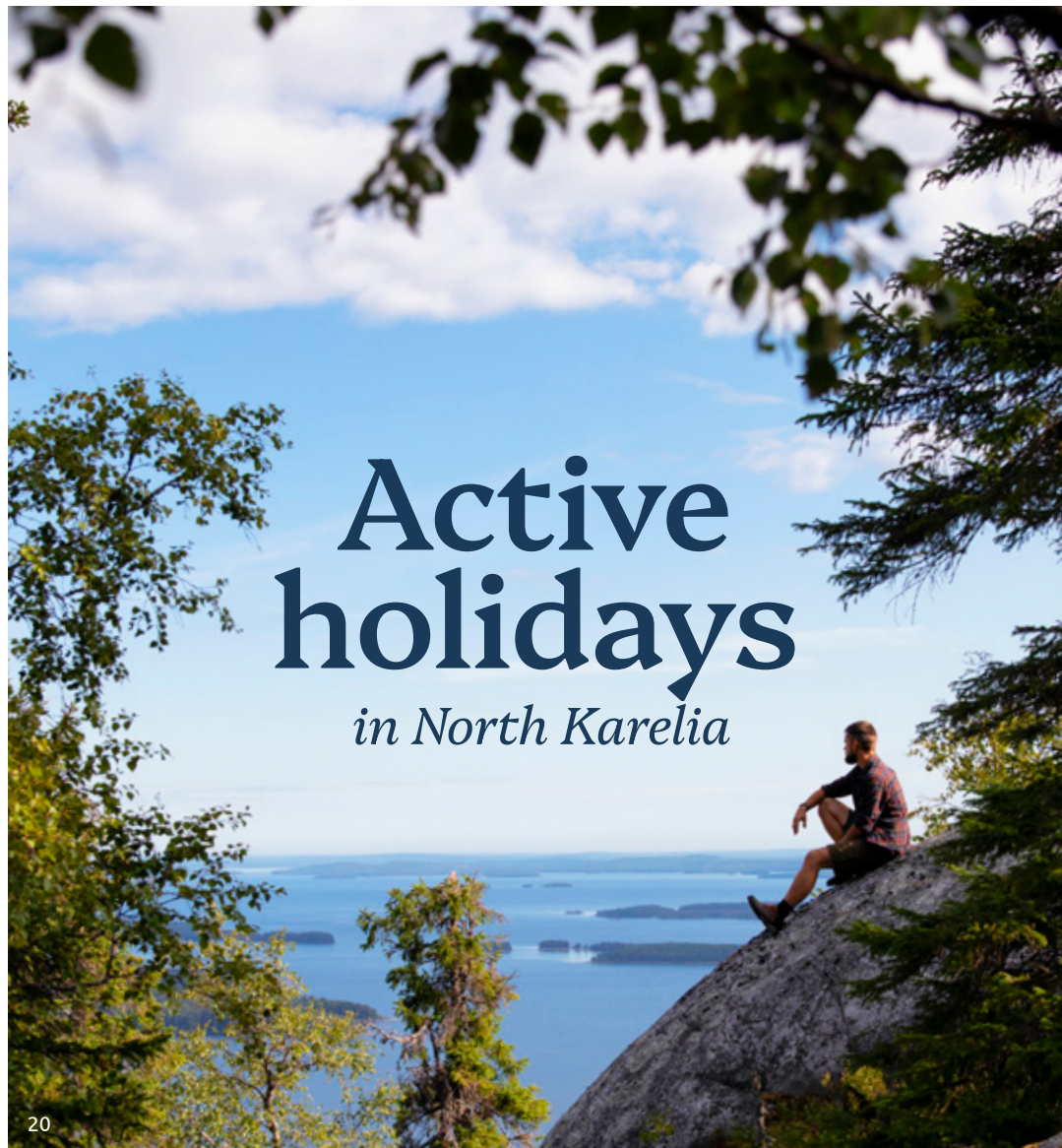
sales@aksydammat.fi

Recognitions & awards:



Best food tourism product
in Hungry for Finland
competition 2015





ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT DMC

New product

Mushroom & Berry Week in Finland

NURMES

- ◆ Step into the autumn forest of North Karelia
- ◆ Get to know the traditional foraging lifestyle

ITINERARY

Explore autumn forests, forage mushrooms and berries, and learn traditional Finnish ways of cooking and preserving their harvest. The days are filled with guided walks, campfire picnics, and hands-on workshops, while evenings bring hearty meals and relaxing sauna sessions. Based at Guesthouse Pihlajapuu, the program combines authentic local hospitality with the quiet beauty of nature.

**Duration:**

7 days / 6 nights

Validity:

Departures in 2026:

- 26 Sep-3 Oct
- 3-10 Oct

Minimum pax amount:

4 pax

Inclusions:

Accommodation in double rooms (shared showers and toilets), full board: breakfast, picnic lunch and dinner daily, daily sauna, guided excursions and collecting equipment, preservation material and recipes to take home, transportation from Kuopio airport or Nurmes train station

From price (gross per person on twin share):

1500€ pp in a twin

Arrival point:

Kuopio airport, 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

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, Raesärkäät 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 2026:
• 30 May-6 Jun

• 19-26 Sep
• Other times upon request.

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):
1550€ person 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



New product

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 2026:

- 14th of February
- 7th of March
- 14th of March
- 21st of March

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:
• On the arrival/departure day:
• By plane Helsinki > Kuopio or 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 (net, per person in twin share):

Price: from 1750€ 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@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 2026 and 2027

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)

- ◆ 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 newly built, 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:

7 days / 6 nights

Validity:

Jun-Sep 2026 and 2027

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 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 2026 and 2027

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

Unique Adventures

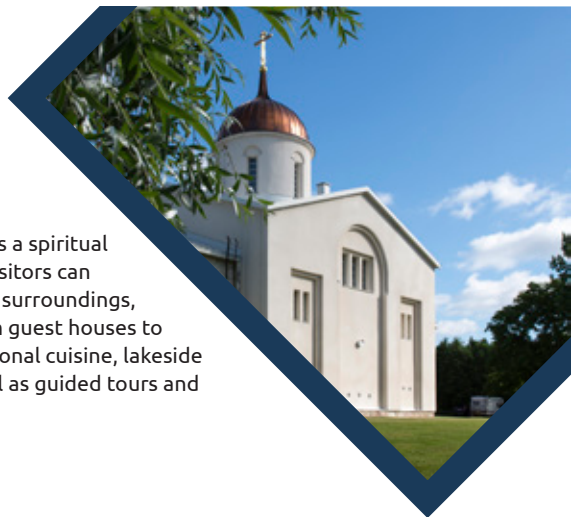
in North Karelia

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

Valamo Monastery

Located in Heinävesi, Valamo Monastery is a spiritual and cultural landmark of North Karelia. Visitors can experience Orthodox traditions, peaceful surroundings, and simple accommodations ranging from guest houses to hotel rooms. The monastery offers traditional cuisine, lakeside saunas, seasonal holiday packages, as well as guided tours and study programs throughout the year.

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



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



**Best accommodation
in the Nordics 2025**



House of Bear

**Sacred Journey and Pilgrimage
around Koli and Lake Pielinen
8.-14. June 2026**

A shamanistic pilgrimage around Lake Pielinen leads from Koli through Nurmes, Lieksa, Vuonislahti, and the Paalasmaa archipelago. The journey includes rituals, meditation, shared meals, sauna, and nature time, offering reflection, healing, and a deeper bond with nature.

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.

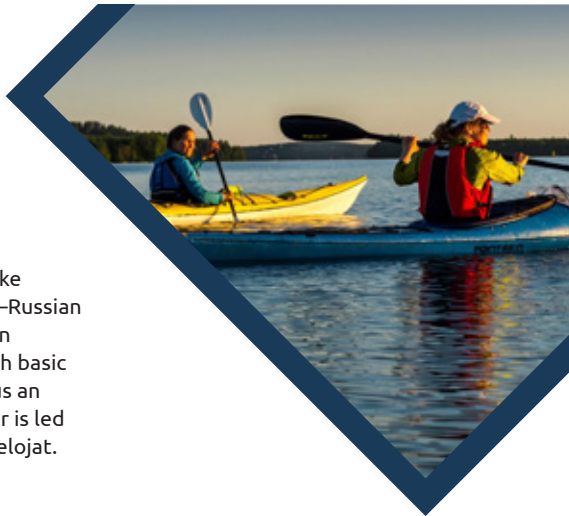
For more information, please visit:
kalastusretket.fi/en/rentalake



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.

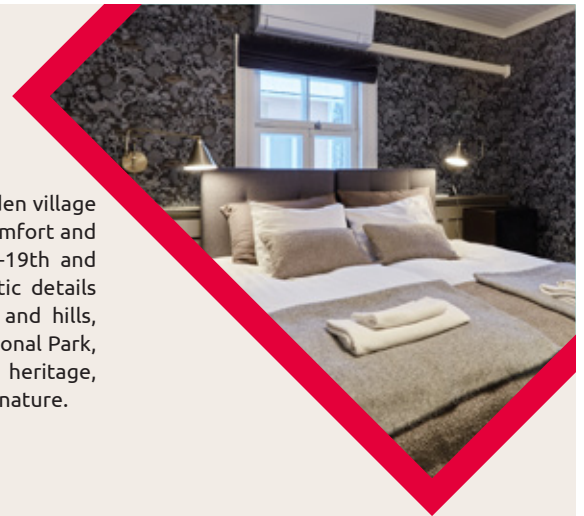
For more information, please visit:
lakelandkarelia.fi



Puu-Juuka

Puu-Juuka is a beautifully restored wooden village in North Karelia, where history meets comfort and hospitality. Visitors stay in unique late-19th and early-20th century houses with authentic details and cozy charm. Surrounded by water and hills, and just a 30-minute drive from Koli National Park, it offers the perfect blend of cultural heritage, relaxation, and access to Finland's iconic nature.

For more information, please visit:
puujuuka.com



Events & more

Gravel biking events

Koli Gravel Carnival - 23 May 2026
Sorahiisi gravel biking event - August 2026

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 biathlon

Kontiolahti - 2.-8.3.2026
25.-29.11.2026 | 8.-12.12.2027

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.

Sustainability certificate
EcoCompass environmental
management system



Lieksa Brass Week

Lieksa - 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 - 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 - 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.



Koli marathon

**Koli national park
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 - 10.-12.7.2026

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 - 31 Dec-late March
2026 & 2027. Visual Festival
19-22 Nov 2026**

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

Places of interest



1 Koli National Park

The most iconic landscape of Finland.



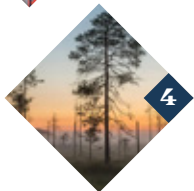
2 Kolovesi National Park

Habitat of rare Saimaa ringed seal & ancient rock paintings.



3 Bomba, the Karelisan Village

Authentic Karelisan architecture.

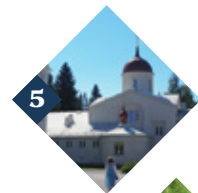


4 Patvinsuo National Park

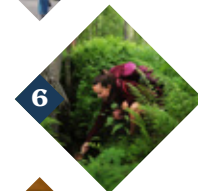
Largest national park in southern Finland & habitat of bears.



Valamo and Lintula
Iconic Orthodox monasteries.



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



Parppeinvaara Rune Singer's Village
Traditional Karelisan 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	150 €; journey time 1 hr		45 € pp; on demand bus service (once a day at 12.00 from Joensuu)
Koli-Nurmes/Bomba or vv	175 €; journey time 1 hr 5 mins		Approx 16 € pp; one connection per day; journey time 1,5 hrs
Nurmes/Bomba-Joensuu or vv	260 €; 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	170 €; 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	170 €; journey time 1 hr 10 mins 145 €; 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	150 €; journey time 50 mins		18 € pp; one connection per day; journey time 1 hr 40 mins
Joensuu-Kitee or vv	165 €; 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	40 €; 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/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



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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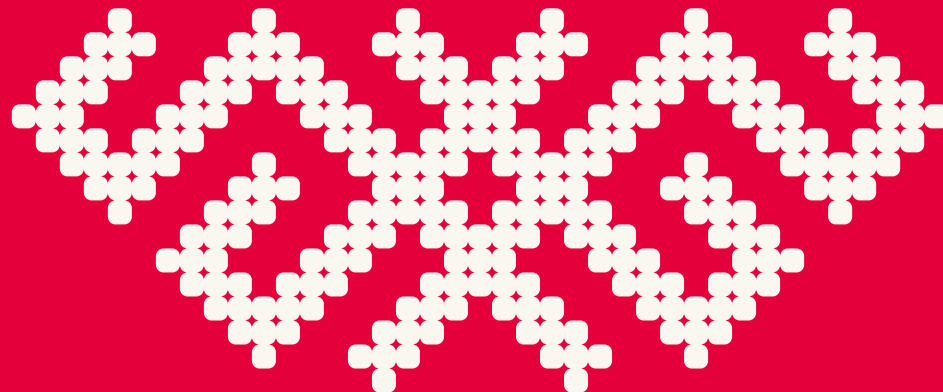


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