



5 reasons to be inspired by Helsinki

1. Urban city culture and clean Nordic nature in the same package

Helsinki is one of the greenest metropolises in the world: over one third of the city consists of parks and other green areas, and it is surrounded on three sides by the sea, which is an essential part everyday life in Helsinki. Helsinki has almost **100 kilometres of shoreline** and around **300 islands**. Many of the islands are accessible for recreational use.

The archipelago offers endless opportunities for experiences at their best at summer time. Helsinki's islands and coastline are perfect places to enjoy the fresh air and swimming. Visitors can try an authentic Finnish sauna e.g. on the island of Uunisaari or in the brand new Kulttuurisauna "Culture Sauna" beside the sea in Hakaniemi.

Helsinki is also one of the cleanest capital cities in the world. The noise, pollution and congestion that are often associated with capital cities are noticeably absent here. The safe and tidy streets combined with the compact size of the city make Helsinki a pleasant place to visit.

2. The urban northern summer experience and the landmarks of Helsinki

In summertime the terraces, parks, seaside boulevards of Helsinki and nearby islands are filled with people enjoying the outdoors. The nights are white and the evening entertainment stretches into the early hours of the morning. Summer is also the season for urban festivals and open-air events. Even on the hottest days of the year, the breezes off the sea remain fresh.

The symbol of Helsinki is the brilliant white cathedral known in Finnish as Tuomiokirkko that towers above Senate Square. Other known and interesting landmarks are Uspenski Cathedral and Temppeliaukio Church, the Olympic Stadium and the popular monument to legendary Finnish composer Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) in Sibelius Park.

You must not miss Suomenlinna, which is one of the world's biggest sea fortresses. Constructed on a chain of islands off the coast of Helsinki in the 1700s, the fortress is one of the most popular attractions in Finland and is one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

3. Friendly locals and vibrant food culture

Helsinki's open and friendly residents wish visitors, along with new events and trends, a very warm welcome to this dynamic and lively city. Restaurant Day, flea markets, We Love Helsinki happenings and block parties are all examples of the flourishing urban culture. In summertime the streets and parks are also packed with fun-loving people. And it's worth remembering that the midnight sun hardly sets at all, allowing the active nightlife to continue uninterrupted into the morning.

The restaurant life in Helsinki gradually got started in the early 1800s. In two centuries Helsinki has grown into a diverse restaurant city. In the 2000s the capital's restaurant scene has been elevated to a new level of restaurants led by top chefs, and the initial French cuisine has been overtaken by a celebration of Nordic ingredients. From Michelin star level gourmet restaurants to good food at moderate prices, the selection of more than 1 200 restaurants in Helsinki is able to provide enjoyment for all tastes.

4. Architecture and design

The cityscape in Helsinki harmoniously combines Neoclassicism, Art Nouveau, Alvar Aalto and contemporary architecture. The buildings in the city centre present visitors with a fascinating journey through the changing styles of past centuries.

Design is a factor deep-rooted in the urban lifestyle of Helsinki. Design is manifest in the everyday lives of Helsinki citizens in many ways, ranging from home furniture and items that represent old Finnish design traditions to modern urban solutions in the city and contemporary interior design. In 2012 Helsinki wore the title World Design Capital.

The most famous names in Finnish design include Alvar Aalto, Marimekko, Nokia, Rovio Mobile, Iittala and Arabia. In the fashion industry, Paola Suhonen's IVANA Helsinki, Ilona Hyötyläinen's Miu, Samu-Jussi Koski's Samuji, footwear designer Minna Parikka and Lumi Accessories have wowed audiences the world over.

5. A Unique Maritime City between East and West

Throughout its 450-year history, maritime Helsinki has swung between the currents of Eastern and Western influences. The lifestyle in the second most northern capital city in the world is full of contrasts and fascinating habit cultures. Influences from both the East and West are visible in the city's architecture, culinary culture, events, traditions and many other elements that are unique to the way of life in Helsinki.

Further information:

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Watch the video and enjoy the slow rhythm of urban Helsinki. Explore and be inspired!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gT8n3NLTUWg>

Helsinki Marketing Ltd is a city-owned company that is responsible for the city's marketing operations, including tourism, congress, event and business marketing activities, application procedures for major events and congresses, tourist information services and some of the city's event productions. Helsinki Marketing works in close cooperation with the Helsinki City Executive Office's Economic Development division.