

COUNTRY INTRODUCTION

Finland



Geography of Finland

Finland is a northern European country located between Sweden and Russia, with the Baltic Sea along its southern coast. Much of the country is covered in forests and lakes, giving Finland its nickname, the Land of a Thousand Lakes. In the far north lies Lapland, where winter lasts for months, snow and ice turn the land into a sparkling wonderland, and the Northern Lights dance across the night sky. Lapland is also the official home of Santa Claus!



History of Finland

Finland's history goes back more than 9,000 years, to the end of the last Ice Age, when the first people arrived, hunting, fishing, and gathering along the coasts and forests. Around 5,000 BCE, the Comb Ceramic Culture brought new ways of living, including pottery and trade across northern Europe. The Sami people, an indigenous group still living in northern Finland today, arrived around 2,000 BCE and are famous for their reindeer herding and connection to the Arctic land. For many centuries, Finland was ruled by Sweden and later became part of the Russian Empire. Swedish rule brought towns, churches, and schools, while Russian control gave Finland more autonomy and helped it develop its own national identity. Finland became fully independent in 1917, after a short civil war, and grew into a modern democratic nation.



Finland's Economy

Finland has a strong and stable economy. It is known for technology and innovation, with companies making phones, software, and other high-tech products. Forestry and paper products have long been important, thanks to Finland's vast forests, and the country also produces machinery and clean energy. Tourism is growing too, especially in Lapland, where visitors come to see snow, reindeer, and the Northern Lights. In fact, Finland has been named one of the top destinations for 2026 by Lonely Planet!



Landmarks in Finland

Tourists are drawn to Finland for its beautiful and magical landscapes.

Lapland is famous for snowy forests, reindeer, Santa Claus Village and the Northern Lights, while the thousands of lakes across the country are perfect for swimming (even ice swimming in winter!), swimming, ice skating, or ice fishing.

Helsinki, the capital, is a vibrant city with modern architecture and lively markets, and towns like Turku and Porvoo are known for their historic streets, colourful wooden houses, and medieval landmarks.



Rovaniemi: Santa Claus Village

Right on the Arctic Circle in Rovaniemi, deep in Finnish Lapland, lies Santa Claus Village, one of Finland's most famous attractions and the official hometown of Santa Claus! Here, you can meet Santa himself any day of the year, step across the bold white line that marks the Arctic Circle, and even send postcards stamped with a special Arctic Circle postmark from Santa's own post office. Every year, Santa Claus receives around 500,000 letters from children all over the world at his Main Post Office in Rovaniemi!



wild Life in Finland

Finland is full of amazing animals, especially in its forests and far northern regions. You might find a brown bear quietly wandering through the trees, a wolverine dashing across the snow, or the elusive Eurasian lynx prowling silently at night. In Lapland, the arctic fox braves the icy winters, and reindeer roam freely across the snowy landscapes. Lakes and rivers are home to beavers, otters, the rare Saimaa ringed seal and plenty of birds, making Finland a place full of wildlife adventures for those who love nature.



Festivals and Traditions in Finland

Juhannus, or Midsummer, celebrated in June, is Finland's biggest holiday, marked by bonfires, sauna gatherings, and spending time at summer cottages by the lakes. Vappu, in April and May, is a popular celebration to welcome spring, featuring balloons, picnics, and kids (and adults!) enjoy specially sweet drinks and funnel cakes during the festivities. In Lapland, special winter festivals celebrate snow, reindeer, and the magical Northern Lights.





Finnish Culture and Cuisine

Finnish culture is shaped by its forests, lakes, and long winters, with influences from Sweden and Russia. Food is an important part of life, from rye bread, salmon soup, and Karelian pies to sweet treats like pulla (cinnamon buns) and korvapuusti (cinnamon rolls). In Lapland, reindeer dishes are traditional, and fresh fish from lakes is often enjoyed. Saunas are a big part of everyday life and are sometimes followed by a quick dip in a lake, or even ice swimming in winter! Meals and treats are central to family gatherings and festival celebrations.



Curiosities about Finland

Finland is known as the Land of a Thousand Lakes, but it actually has over 187,000 lakes.

Lapland is the official home of Santa Claus.

In summer, the Midnight Sun shines for weeks without setting, while in winter, the Northern Lights paint the sky in magical colors. Finns love their saunas, often followed by a dip in a lake, even ice swimming in winter, with over 3 million saunas across the country's 5.5 million people.



We've got something special for you!

Want to learn more about Finland? Our Finland Digital Magazine takes a deeper dive into this magical country! In this 80-page Finland Special Christmas Edition, your kids will have access:

- An adventure story set in Lapland
- Fun facts, quizzes, mythology and folktales about Finland
- Puzzles, treasure hunts, and colouring pages
- Rovaniemi & Santa's Village
- Wildlife trading cards: Arctic foxes, wolverines, and more
- Northern Lights, Midnight Sun, and polar night
- A Finnish recipe and craft activities
- Inventions, famous Finns, kid-friendly Finnish words and much more!

Enjoy 10% off with
code **PRE1025**



Scan for more
information



Scan the QR code below to sign up for our newsletter! You'll get country units, fun recipes, activities, discounts on our digital magazines, and more surprises delivered straight to your inbox.

