**Esplanadi**, a wide, tree-lined boulevard across a mishmash of tramlines from the harbour, is Helsinki at its most charming. A couple of blocks north of its eastern end, the suavely refurbished [**City Museum**](http://helsinginkaupunginmuseo.fi) at Aleksanterinkatu 16 (Mon–Fri 11am–7pm, Sat & Sun 11am–5pm; free) offers a microcosm of 450 years of Helsinki life through wonderful interactive exhibitions. Just west of City Museum is **Senate Square** (Senattintori), dominated by the exquisite form of the **[Tuomiokirkko](http://helsinginseurakunnat.fi" \t "_blank)** (Cathedral; June–Aug daily 9am–midnight; Sept–May Mon–Sat 9am–6pm, Sun noon–6pm). After the elegance of the exterior, the spartan Lutheran interior comes as a disappointment; more impressive is the gloomily atmospheric **crypt** (entrance on Kirkkokatu; June–Aug daily 9am–midnight; Sept–May Mon–Sat 9am–6pm, Sun noon–6pm), now often used for exhibitions. West across **Unioninkatu**, the city’s most spectacular interior decoration awaits in the soaring ceilings and mesmerizing decorative painting of the [**National Library of Finland**](http://kansalliskirjasto.fi) (Mon–Fri 9am–6pm, plus some Sat; free).