About 50km east of Helsinki, **Porvoo**is one of the oldest towns on the south coast and among Finland’s most charming places. Its narrow cobbled streets, flanked by brightly hued wooden buildings, give a sense of Finnish life before Helsinki’s bold Neoclassical geometry came along. The Porvoo Museum (May–Aug Mon–Sat 10am–4pm, Sun 11am–4pm; Sept–April Wed–Sun noon–4pm; €8) includes the **Johan Ludwig Runeberg House** at Aleksanterinkatu 3 near the station where the famed Finnish poet lived from 1852; one of his poems provided the lyrics for the Finnish national anthem. The old town is built around the hill on the other side of Mannerheimkatu, crowned by the fifteenth-century **Tuomiokirkko** (May–Sept Mon–Fri 10am–6pm, Sat 10am–2pm, Sun 2–5pm; Oct–April Tues–Sat 10am–2pm, Sun 2–4pm), where Alexander I proclaimed Finland a Russian Grand Duchy. The cathedral survived a serious arson attack in 2006 and reopened two years later.