

# Finland

**Continent:** Europe

**Languages Spoken:** Finnish, Swedish

**Population:** 5,540,000

**Currency:** Euro (EUR)

**Area:** 338,424

## Main Landmarks:

- {'name': 'Helsinki Cathedral', 'writeup': 'A distinctive white neoclassical cathedral located in the capital, symbolizing Finnish Lutheran heritage.'}
- {'name': 'Suomenlinna', 'writeup': 'An 18th-century sea fortress spread across six islands, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site.'}
- {'name': 'Santa Claus Village', 'writeup': 'Located in Rovaniemi, it is known as the official hometown of Santa Claus and a popular tourist destination.'}
- {'name': 'Olavinlinna Castle', 'writeup': 'A 15th-century medieval castle in Savonlinna, famous for its annual opera festival.'}
- {'name': 'Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis)', 'writeup': 'A natural light display visible in Lapland, attracting visitors for its spectacular night sky phenomena.'}

## Head of State / Government:

President Sauli Niinistö

## Main Cultural Events:

- {'name': 'Vappu', 'writeup': 'A spring festival celebrated on May 1st, marking workers' day and student festivities with picnics and parties.'}
- {'name': 'Juhannus (Midsummer)', 'writeup': 'A midsummer celebration involving bonfires, sauna, and gatherings to mark the longest day of the year.'}
- {'name': 'Helsinki Festival', 'writeup': 'An annual arts festival featuring music, theater, and dance performances across Helsinki.'}
- {'name': 'Savonlinna Opera Festival', 'writeup': 'A prestigious summer opera festival held in the medieval Olavinlinna Castle.'}
- {'name': 'Kaamos Festival', 'writeup': 'A winter festival in Lapland celebrating the polar night with music and cultural events.'}

## Food & Cuisine:

Finnish cuisine emphasizes fresh, seasonal ingredients such as fish, rye bread, berries, and mushrooms. Traditional dishes include karjalanpiirakka (rice pies), kalakukko (fish pie), and reindeer meat, reflecting the country's Nordic heritage.

## Brief History:

Finland was part of Sweden until 1809, then became an autonomous Grand Duchy under Russia. It declared independence in 1917. The country experienced a civil war in 1918 and remained neutral during World War II. Post-war, Finland developed a strong welfare state and joined the European Union in 1995.

**Important People:**

- Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim - Military leader and statesman
- Jean Sibelius - Renowned composer
- Linus Torvalds - Creator of Linux kernel
- Tarja Halonen - First female president of Finland
- Alvar Aalto - Influential architect and designer

**Current Conflicts:**

Finland is not involved in any active military conflicts. It maintains a policy of military non-alignment but has recently joined NATO as of 2023.

**Youtube Links:**

- Finland - The Land of a Thousand Lakes | Travel Documentary
- Top 10 Things to Know About Finland
- Finnish Culture and Traditions Explained
- Why Finland is the Happiest Country in the World
- Exploring Helsinki: Finland's Capital City