

Saimaa Lake Tour 2005

This short tour takes you to the heart of the Finnish lake district, where you see some beautiful lake scenery, which the country is famous for. Visit historical landmarks and learn about the eastern orthodox traditions on a monastery visit.

Departures

June 3, 10, 17, 23, 30

July 6, 12, 18, 24, 30

August 3, 7, 11, 15, 19

Duration

3 days / 2 nights

Meeting Point and Time in Helsinki

In front of the hotel's entrance at: Radisson SAS Plaza at 8.15 a.m., Sokos Hotel Vaakuna 8.30, Cumulus Seurahuone 8.30, Scandic Hotel Simonkenttä 8.45, and Scandic Hotel Continental at 9.00 am.

Prices per Person

In shared twin room	€ 560
Single supplement	€ 110
Child under 12 years in extra bed sharing the room with two adults	€ 470
Extra bed for 3 rd adult	€ 560

Tour Includes

- accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with bath or shower
- luggage handling in hotels
- 2 buffet breakfasts, 2 lunches and 2 dinners
- transportation by private coach
- sightseeing, visits, excursions and entrance fees according to the program
- multilingual tour leader
- domestic flight Joensuu-Helsinki
- service charges and taxes on included items

Day 1: Helsinki-Porvoo-Ruotsinpyhtää-Langinkoski-Imatra

Day 2: Imatra-Punkaharju-Savonlinna-Valamo-Koli

Day 3: Koli-Joensuu-Helsinki

Day 1: Tracing the Czar's Footsteps

(L, D, coach, 270 km / 168 miles)

Your journey through the Finnish Lakeland starts as you depart by coach for Porvoo, the second oldest town in Finland. Situated on the banks of a river, the old part of the town is famous for its charming red warehouses, cobblestone lanes and handicraft shops. It was in the medieval cathedral of Porvoo that Czar Alexander I declared Finland an autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia in 1809, the first step on the way to independence.

Lunch will be enjoyed in the old Ruotsinpyhtää ironworks village, dotted with red 18th-century workers' dwellings.

On the way to Imatra you will stop to admire the Langinkoski rapids. Czar Alexander III had an imperial fishing lodge built on the shore of the roaring rapids, and the court in St. Petersburg was provided with salmon caught by the czar's fishermen.

Dinner and overnight at Rantasipi Hotel Valtionhotelli in Imatra.

Day 2: The Land of Thousands of Lakes

(B, L, D, coach, 270 km / 168 miles)

We approach the Retretti Art Exhibition via the Punkaharju esker ridge, an isthmus between two large lakes. The under- and over-ground exhibition halls of Retretti house an exhibition of classical as well as contemporary visual arts.

After lunch in Punkaharju you head to Savonlinna. On a small island in the centre of the town stands the best-preserved medieval fortress in the Nordic countries, Olavinlinna Castle. Founded in 1475, the castle and its three magnificent towers have seen the Swedes rowing through the straits, the Russians skiing across the ice and the Finns building a bridge over the troubled water. Every summer it turns into the scene of one of the oldest music festivals in Europe, the Savonlinna Opera Festival.

The eastern orthodox monastery of Valamo still bears the name of the island in Lake Ladoga from where it was transferred to Heinävesi in 1940. In the Valamo Monastery, tea is brewed in the traditional style in a massive silver samovar, sweetened with raspberry jam, and served in tea glasses. The tea is accompanied by old-Russian delicacies.

Continue to Koli Hills, one of Finland's best-known places of natural beauty. From the highest hilltop there is a spectacular view over forests and lakes. Dinner and overnight at Sokos Hotel Koli in Lieksa.

Day 3: Homeward-Bound

(B, flight)

Breakfast at hotel. Transfer to Joensuu airport and flight to Helsinki. The flight schedule varies from one departure to another; the return flight may even be in the evening.

Scenic Finland Tour 2005

See places of great natural beauty and gain insight into the Finnish heritage. Visit the Saimaa lake district and continue through Karelia, a borderland between East and West where eastern Orthodox traditions are part of everyday life. From the untouched wilds of Kuusamo, you go on to Rovaniemi, the capital of Finnish Lapland on the Arctic Circle.

Departures

June 3, 10, 17, 23, 30
July 6, 12, 18, 24, 30
August 3, 7, 11, 15, 19

Duration: 7 days / 6 nights

Meeting Point and Time in Helsinki

In front of the hotel's entrance at: Radisson SAS Plaza at 8.15 a.m., Sokos Hotel Vaakuna 8.30, Cumulus Seurahuone 8.30, Scandic Hotel Simonkenttä 8.45, and Scandic Hotel Continental at 9.00 am.

Note! It is possible to join the North Cape Tour in Rovaniemi.

Prices per Person

In shared twin room	€ 1450
Single supplement	€ 300
Child under 12 years in extra bed sharing the room with two adults	€ 1210
Extra bed for 3 rd adult	€ 1450

Tour Includes

- accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with bath/shower
- luggage handling in hotels
- 6 buffet breakfasts, 6 lunches, 6 dinners
- transportation by private coach
- sightseeing, visits, excursions, and entrance fees according to the program
- multilingual tour leader
- domestic flight Rovaniemi – Helsinki
- service charges and taxes on included items

Day 1: Helsinki-Porvoo-Ruotsinpyhtää-Langinkoski-Imatra

Day 2: Imatra-Punkaharju-Savonlinna-Valamo-Koli

Day 3: Koli-Joensuu-Kiihtelysvaara-Tuupovaara-Ilomantsi-Koli

Day 4: Koli-Vuonisahti-Lieksa-Kuhmo **Day 5:** Kuhmo-Kuusamo

Day 6: Kuusamo-Rovaniemi **Day 7:** Rovaniemi-Helsinki

Day 1: Traces of the Past

(L, D, coach, 270 km / 168 miles)

Depart by coach for Porvoo, the second oldest town in Finland. The old part of the town is famous for its charming old warehouses, cobblestone lanes, handicraft shops and the medieval cathedral. Lunch will be enjoyed in the old Ruotsinpyhtää ironworks village, dotted with red 18th-century workers' dwellings. Next stop will be at Langinkoski rapids where you see the imperial fishing lodge that Czar Alexander III had built on the shore of the roaring rapids. Dinner and overnight at Rantasipi Hotel Valtionhotelli in Imatra.

Day 2: Stunning Finnish Countryside

(B, L, D, coach, 270 km / 168 miles)

Drive through the beautiful Punkaharju esker ridge, an isthmus between two large lakes, and continue to Retretti Art Exhibition featuring classical and contemporary collections, housed partly in an underground cave. After lunch in Punkaharju you head to Savonlinna to pay a visit to Olavinlinna Castle, the venue of the annual Savonlinna Opera Festival. In the afternoon you visit the eastern orthodox monastery of Valamo in Heinävesi and have a cup of tea brewed in the traditional style in a silver samovar, sweetened with raspberry jam and accompanied by old-Russian delicacies. Continue to Koli Hills, Finland's best-known spot of natural beauty. From the highest hilltop there is a spectacular view over forests and lakes. Dinner and overnight at Sokos Hotel Koli in Lieksa.

Day 3: Karelian Heritage

(B, L, D, coach, 330 km / 205 miles)

Today's excursion will acquaint you with Karelian culture and traditions. On a visit to a local farmhouse you will experience the friendly hospitality that the Karelians are famous for. See fine examples of wooden architecture and visit exhibitions of local arts and crafts, listen to music played on Kantele, the Finnish folk music instrument, and savor Karelian specialties. Dinner and overnight at Sokos Hotel Koli in Lieksa.

Day 4: Art and Adventures

(B, L, D, coach, 250 km / 155 miles)

On the way to Kuhmo you will stop in Vuonisahti to see the studio and the little log chapel of sculptress Eva Ryyänen, who had a unique talent for making sculptures out of wood. In the Ruunaa wilderness close to the Finnish-Russian border, you have a chance to shoot the rapids on a long wooden boat, steered by local fishermen. After lunch by a crackling fire, tour proceeds to Kalevala village, which offers a fascinating look at the old traditions of the Karelian people as they were in the 19th century, a period when the ancient poems of Finland's national epic, the Kalevala, were collected. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Kalevala in Kuhmo.

Day 5: Impressive Landscapes

(B, L, D, coach 290 km / 180 miles)

After guided tour of the village, continue northwards. You see the North-Karelian landscape of hills, lakes, and lush green meadows change to steep cliffs, streams, and wild forests. Lunch en route. In Kuusamo, stop to admire a natural sight of astounding beauty, Julma Ölkky, the deepest canyon lake in the area. Dinner and overnight at Spa Hotel Kuusamon Tropiikki in Kuusamo.

Day 6: Where Santa Claus is at Home

(B, L, D, coach, 200 km / 124 miles)

After breakfast you set off for an excursion to Lake Kitka. Sitting in a rowing boat or standing on the shore, you can watch local fishermen seine-fishing. If the catch is good, it will be prepared for lunch. On the way to Rovaniemi, you pay a visit to the coffee cup museum. See the key sights of Rovaniemi and visit Santa's Workshop at the Arctic Circle, meeting the jolly old man in person, and taking part in a Lapp ceremony. Dinner and overnight at Quality Hotel Santa Claus in Rovaniemi.

Day 7: Goodbye to Finland

(B, coach, flight)

Transfer to Rovaniemi airport for morning flight to Helsinki.

North Cape Tour 2005

Early flight brings you from Helsinki to Rovaniemi. Continue by private motor coach through some impressive Lapp scenery and along the Arctic Ocean until you reach the North Cape, Europe's northernmost plateau. You will experience many aspects of Lapp culture along the journey.

Departures

June 9, 16, 23, 29
July 6, 12, 18, 24, 30
August 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25

Duration

5 days / 4 nights

Meeting Point and Time

At Helsinki-Vantaa airport at the domestic terminal one hour prior to flight departure. Look for FTB assistant with North Cape Tour sign.

In North Cape, Norway, the sun is above the horizon from May 10 to July 25. However, you can experience the "White Nights" until mid-August, after which the days shorten rapidly.

Prices per person

In shared twin room	€ 1415
Single supplement	€ 190
Child under 12 years in extra bed sharing the room with two adults	€ 1200
Extra bed for 3 rd adult	€ 1415

Tour Includes

- accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with bath/shower
- luggage handling in hotels
- 4 buffet breakfasts, 5 lunches, 4 dinners
- transportation by private coach
- sightseeing, visits, excursions and entrance fees according to the program
- multilingual tour leader
- domestic flight Helsinki-Rovaniemi-Helsinki
- service charges and taxes on included items

Day 1: Helsinki-Rovaniemi-Särestö-Kittilä
Day 2: Kittilä-Harriniva-Hetta-Kautokeino-Alta
Day 3: Alta-Honningsvåg-North Cape-Honningsvåg
Day 4: Honningsvåg-Inari-Saariselkä
Day 5: Saariselkä-Tankavaara-Luosto-Rovaniemi-Helsinki

Note! You are welcome to continue on this tour after Scenic Finland Tour.

Day 1: Architecture in Lapland (L, D, flight, coach, 171 km / 106 miles)

Early morning flight brings you to Rovaniemi, the capital of Finnish Lapland. During the sightseeing tour you will see works designed by Finland's most famous architect Alvar Aalto. Crossing the magic line of the Arctic Circle is a great experience for any visitor. To make it truly exotic, you take part in a Lapp initiation ceremony. You will also enjoy lunch at the Arctic Circle, in a Lapp tepee. Continue northwards along the Ounasjoki River, and stop at the Art Museum of Reidar Särestöniemi, the most notable Lapp artist who found his motifs in Lapland's nature. His former studio and home, a complex of log houses, represent traditional Lapp architecture. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Sirkantähti or similar in Kittilä.

Day 2: Shooting the Rapids (B, L, D, coach, boat, 343 km / 213 miles)

Properly equipped with a rain gear and a life vest, you set off from Harriniva on board a pneumatic lifeboat on an exciting, yet comfortable and perfectly safe one-hour journey through seven rapids. As you come ashore, nothing will taste better than steaming hot soup served around a glowing campfire. You continue northwards via Kautokeino, the largest Lapp cultural centre in Norway. As you travel, you notice the rolling hills of Finnish Lapland changing into Norwegian tundra. At last you reach the Arctic Ocean and the fishing port of Alta. Dinner and overnight at Rica Hotel Alta or similar.

Day 3: North Cape Panorama (B, L, D, coach, 254 km / 158 miles)

Alta is famous for its 5000 to 6000 year-old rock carvings, which are so prestigious that they have been included in the World Heritage List of UNESCO. During a visit to the

Alta museum there is a unique opportunity to experience the world of an ancient Lapp depicted in the rock carvings. Continue towards Honningsvåg stopping for lunch on the way. You reach the North Cape in the evening. In front of your eyes opens the Arctic Ocean and the endless scenery. Standing on Europe's northernmost plateau you celebrate this unforgettable moment with sparkling wine and local caviar. Dinner and overnight at Rica Bryggen Hotel or similar in Honningsvåg.

Day 4: The Past and Present of the Sami People (B, L, D, coach, 393 km / 244 miles)

Enjoy the last glimpses of the awesome northern landscapes, as you head back south driving along one of the most beautiful Norwegian fjords. Lunch will be en route in the little village of Karasjok. Back in Finland, you visit an open air Sami museum in Inari. Buildings and handicraft collected from different regions of Lapland give you a fascinating look into the life of the nomadic Samis or Lapps of yesterday.

While visiting a local reindeer herder at his home, you will have the opportunity to see how a present day Lapp family lives and treasures the ancient traditions. You will listen to joiku-singing, a chant in the Sami language, and hear the owner of the farm telling you about reindeer breeding. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Riekonlinna in Saariselkä.

Day 5: Gold Rush à la Tankavaara (B, L, coach, flight, 261 km / 162 miles)

The last stop in northern Lapland is the Tankavaara Gold Village. Relive the thrills of the Gold Rush that once attracted hundreds of men into the region in the hope of finding a gold nugget. Today you will also have the opportunity to try your luck in washing for gold. Lunch will be taken in Luosto on the way to Rovaniemi airport. Evening flight back to Helsinki.

Combined Scenic Finland and North Cape Tour 2005

Departures

June 3, 10, 17, 23, 30
July 6, 12, 18, 24, 30
August 3, 7, 11, 15, 19

Duration

11 days / 10 nights

Meeting Point and Time in Helsinki

In front of the hotel's entrance at: Radisson SAS Plaza at 8.15 am,
Sokos Hotel Vaakuna 8.30, Cumulus Seurahuone 8.30,
Scandic Hotel Simonkenttä 8.45 and Scandic Hotel Continental at 9.00 a.m.

Prices per Person

In shared twin room	€ 2200
Single supplement	€ 515
Child under 12 years in extra bed sharing the room with two adults	€ 1875
Extra bed for 3 rd adult	€ 2200

Tour Includes

- accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with bath or shower
- luggage handling in hotels
- 10 buffet breakfasts, 11 lunches and 10 dinners
- transportation by private coach
- sightseeing, visits, excursions and entrance fees according to the program
- multilingual tour leader
- domestic flight Rovaniemi – Helsinki
- service charges and taxes on included items

Day 1: Helsinki-Porvoo-Ruotsinpyhtää-Langinkoski-Imatra

Day 2: Imatra-Punkaharju-Savonlinna-Valamo-Koli

Day 3: Koli-Joensuu-Kiihtelysvaara-Tuupovaara-Ilomantsi-Koli

Day 4: Koli-Vuonisahti-Lieksa-Kuhmo

Day 5: Kuhmo-Kuusamo

Day 6: Kuusamo-Rovaniemi

Day 7: Rovaniemi-Särestö-Kittilä

Day 8: Kittilä-Harriniva-Hetta-Kautokeino-Alta

Day 9: Alta-Honningsvåg-North Cape-Honningsvåg

Day 10: Honningsvåg-Inari-Saariselkä

Day 11: Saariselkä-Tankavaara-Luosto-Rovaniemi-Helsinki

Description as in Scenic Finland and North Cape tours

Lapland Summer Experience 2005

Lapland is a perfect retreat from the hectic city life. This tour allows you to experience the peace and tranquility of pristine wilderness, take part in exciting nature-bound activities and learn about the culture and lifestyle of the Lapps. And in summer you have 24 hours of daylight to enjoy it all! The legendary magic of Lapland has cast a spell over many a visitor and you may also yearn to come back after your first visit.

Departures

June 10, 17, 24, 30
July 7, 13, 19, 25, 31
August 6, 10, 14, 18, 22, 26

Duration: 6 days / 5 nights

NOTE! This is a non-escorted tour. Services of a tour leader and domestic air fares Helsinki-Ivalo and Rovaniemi-Helsinki are not included in the price.

Prices per Person in Shared Twin Room

One passenger	€ 1370
Two or more passengers	€ 1030
Child under 12 years in extra bed sharing the room with two adults	€ 500
Extra bed for 3 rd adult	€ 1370

Tour Includes

- accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with bath or shower including breakfast
- 3 lunches
- airport transfers in Ivalo and Rovaniemi by private car with driver
- sightseeing, visits, excursions, and entrance fees according to the program
- transportation from Ivalo to Rovaniemi by private motor coach together with the North Cape Tour group
- service charges and taxes on included items

Day 1: Ivalo-Saariselkä
Day 2: Saariselkä – Inari
Day 3: Saariselkä
Day 4: Saariselkä-Tankavaara-Rovaniemi
Day 5: Rovaniemi
Day 6: Rovaniemi-Helsinki

Day 1: In the Heart of True Lapland (Private car)

Transfer from Ivalo airport to Saariselkä by private car with driver. Girdled by a chain of gently rolling fells, the holiday village of Saariselkä offers a wealth of overwhelming experiences in unspoiled wilderness. Yet, it has all the modern conveniences. Overnight at Hotel Riekonlinna.

Day 2: Experience Lapp Culture (B, L, car, boat, 160 km)

Today's excursion will acquaint you with the Lapp culture and history. You set off with a safari guide by jeep bound for Inari village, 80 km away. The road winds through the forests and along the shoreline of the vast Lake Inari. In Inari, pay a visit to the Lapp museum, which displays the life of the nomadic, reindeer herding Lapps as it was in the past. A boat cruise along the River Ivalojoiki allows you to savor the stunningly beautiful arctic landscapes. Then you go ashore on a small island and enjoy lunch around an open fire.

Duration of the excursion: 5 hours.
Overnight at Hotel Riekonlinna.

Day 3: A Visit to a Reindeer Farm (B, car)

Herding reindeer is an integral part of the Lapp heritage, and even today reindeer husbandry provides some 2000 Lapp families with a livelihood. The host of a local reindeer farm will tell you more about this old tradition and the Lapp lifestyle, while you visit his farm.

Try throwing a reindeer lasso and enjoy coffee with cake in a Lapp tepee.

Duration of the excursion: 2 to 3 hours.

Overnight at Hotel Riekonlinna.

Day 4: Lapland's Gold Rush (B, L, coach, 310 km)

Join the North Cape Tour passengers, and head by private motor coach towards Rovaniemi, a town on the Arctic Circle. Stop on the way in Tankavaara Gold Village, south of Saariselkä. Lapland's first gold rush took place here in the late 19th century after the first discovery in 1868. You, too, are sure to get "gold fever", as you try your luck in panning for gold. Lunch will be taken on the way in Luosto. Overnight at Quality Hotel Santa Claus in Rovaniemi.

Day 5: The World of Good Old Santa (B, L, private car, boat)

You start the day's program with a sightseeing tour, which takes in the key sights of Rovaniemi. Then pay a visit to the Santa Claus Village. Here, on the Arctic Circle, the Christmas spirit is kept very much alive every day of the year. Drop by Santa's workshop, meet the jolly old man in person, do some souvenir shopping and enjoy lunch in a cozy restaurant. A boat trip along the River Kemijoki is scheduled for the afternoon. After an exhilarating passage in a wooden river boat, you go ashore and visit a local reindeer farm, where the secrets of reindeer rearing will be shown to you in practice. You will also participate in a special Lapp ceremony commemorating your historical crossing of the Arctic Circle. Return to downtown by boat.

Duration of the excursion: 6 hours
Overnight at Quality Hotel Santa Claus in Rovaniemi.

Day 6: Goodbye to Lapland (B, private car)

Transfer from hotel to Rovaniemi airport by private car with English speaking driver.

Highlights of Helsinki and Tallinn 2005

The tour combines the Finnish and Estonian capitals, two pearls of the Baltic Sea, with the captivating countryside that lies around Helsinki. Your home for four nights will be a centrally located hotel in Helsinki, decorated in modern Scandinavian style. The tour includes three guided full-day excursions featuring Tallinn and the surroundings of Helsinki.

A trendy, pulsating metropolis, yet a compact city with a welcoming atmosphere, Helsinki is an ideal destination to explore on your own. All major downtown attractions, shopping areas and museums can be easily reached on foot. The city offers a combination of stunning architectural styles ranging from Neo Classical to twentieth-century Finnish Modernism. Boat trips to the islands that lie off the shoreline are a popular pastime among the locals and provide a superb view of the elegant city skyline from the sea.

Tallinn, one of the oldest cities on the Baltic Sea, lies across the Gulf of Finland, just 80 kilometers to the south. Winding cobblestone streets, massive city walls and mighty towers bear witness to the city's medieval past. Truly a living museum, the Old Town captures the feeling of the medieval era like no other place in the world.

Rich in historical sights, the Southern-Finnish countryside offers fascinating insight into Finland's past. The region is home to some elegant manor houses, picturesque ironworks villages, old greystone churches, and enchanting small towns with wooden houses.

Departures

June 8, 29
July 13, 27
August 17

Duration

5 days / 4 nights

Prices per Person

In shared twin room	€ 980
Single supplement	€ 160
Child under 12 years in extra bed sharing the room with two adults	€ 830
Extra bed for 3 rd adult	€ 910

Tour Includes

- accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with bath or shower
- luggage handling in hotel
- 1 dinner, 4 buffet breakfasts, 3 lunches
- transportation by private coach
- three full-day excursions; Southern-Finnish Countryside, Tallinn and Porvoo
- multilingual guide on the excursions
- return ticket for Helsinki-Tallinn crossing on catamaran
- excursions, visits and entrance fees as defined in the program
- service charges and taxes on included items

Day 1: Arrive Helsinki

Day 2: Helsinki-Kirkkonummi-Karjaa (Mustio)-Tammisaari-Snappertuna-Helsinki

Day 3: Helsinki-Tallinn-Helsinki

Day 4: Helsinki-Porvoo-Järvenpää (Ainola)-Helsinki

Day 5: Depart Helsinki

Day 1: Trendy Finnish Capital

Arrive Helsinki and transfer on your own to hotel. Overnight at Scandic Hotel Simonkenttä in Helsinki.

Day 2: Intriguing Countryside (B, L, D, coach, 200 km / 124 miles)

A full-day guided excursion by motor coach takes you to the charming countryside that stretches to the west of Helsinki. First stop will be at Hvitträsk Museum, located in an impressive landscape. Once the studio and home of three famous architects, the house is a fine example of the Finnish Art Nouveau architecture. Tour continues along quiet country roads to Mustio, one of Finland's most imposing wooden manor houses, dating back to the 18th century. Take a nice stroll through its verdant lakeside grounds. Lunch will be served at a waterfront restaurant in Tammisaari, a coastal town with old wooden houses. The partially restored ruins of a medieval castle, built on a rock, will be seen in Snappertuna, which used to be an important trading place in the 15th century. Evening transfer by motor coach for dinner at a local restaurant in Helsinki. Overnight at Scandic Hotel Simonkenttä in Helsinki.

Day 3: Treasures of Medieval Tallinn (B, L, catamaran, coach)

Early morning transfer to the pier and crossing by a high-speed vessel to Tallinn, where you arrive in less than one and half hours. Explore the Old Town, Northern Europe's best-preserved medieval city, on a walking tour. Sightseeing tour by motor coach features modern Tallinn with traces that the Czarist and Soviet eras have left in Estonia's history. Lunch is served in medieval ambience in the Old Town. Return to Helsinki in the evening. Overnight at Scandic Hotel Simonkenttä.

Day 4: Quaint Wooden Houses (B, L, coach, 130 km / 81 miles)

Today's excursion takes you to the small town of Porvoo, which has preserved much of its quaint atmosphere with narrow cobblestone lanes and wooden red warehouses that line the riverbank. Lunch is served in an elegant manor hotel, once the residence of Russian Czars. Tour proceeds through lovely rural scenery to Ainola, the former home of Finland's greatest composer Jean Sibelius. Overnight at Scandic Hotel Simonkenttä in Helsinki.

Day 5: Depart for Home (B)

Transfer to the airport on your own.

Best of the Baltic's 2005

Historic Capitals and Captivating Countryside

The tour embraces all three Baltic countries, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, each of which has its own distinctive cultural tradition and historical heritage. The three capitals are renowned for their charming old town areas, full of architectural gems. The captivating countryside is worth discovering for its quaint towns and unique landscapes.

Departures

June 13, 27
July 11, 25
August 15

Duration: 7 days / 6 nights

Meeting Point and Time in Helsinki

In the Kanava Terminal at Katajanokka by the Nordic Jet Line group check-in counter one hour prior to departure time. Look for FTB assistant with Baltic Republics sign.

Note! Nationals of some countries require a visa for entry to one or all three of the Baltic States. It is of extreme importance that you check what the current visa requirements are at the time of booking.

Prices per Person

In shared twin room	€ 1520
Single supplement	€ 450
Child under 12 years in extra bed sharing the room with two adults	€ 1150

Tour includes

- accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with bath or shower
- 6 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 6 dinners
- transportation by private coach
- fast catamaran ferry between Helsinki and Tallinn
- sightseeing in Tallinn, Vilnius, Kaunas and Riga with English-speaking local guides
- visits and entrance fees according to the program
- multilingual tour leader
- service charges and taxes on included items

Day 1: Helsinki-Tallinn-Pärnu **Day 2:** Pärnu-Vilnius

Day 3: Vilnius-Trakai-Vilnius

Day 4: Vilnius-Kaunas-Siauliai-Riga **Day 5:** Riga

Day 6: Riga-Valga-Tartu-Tallinn **Day 7:** Tallinn-Helsinki

Day 1: Tallinn – Gateway to the Baltic's

(L, D, ferry, coach, 180 km / 112 miles)

Depart for Tallinn in the morning by high-speed catamaran ferry, which takes you across the Gulf of Finland in 1.5 hours. On arrival in Tallinn, you will explore the city's most important sights on a three-hour tour. After lunch at a local restaurant in the Old Town, you have time for a stroll to enjoy the wealth of its medieval architecture. From Toompea, the Castle hill, you have a magnificent view over the city and the Baltic Sea. Tour continues to the genuine summer city of Pärnu, especially renowned for its spas. The harbor of Pärnu, with its romantic quays, is worth a walk. Dinner and overnight at Rannahotell or similar in Pärnu.

Day 2: Via Baltica

(B, L, D, coach, 520 km / 323 miles)

You travel along the famous Via Baltica from Pärnu to Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. In August 1989 the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians formed a human chain through all the three countries, and Via Baltica became to symbolize the road to freedom. Enjoy lunch on the way close to Bauska in Latvia and arrive in Vilnius in the evening. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Holiday Inn Vilnius or similar.

Day 3: Karaites – Unknown People of Trakai

(B, L, D, coach 100 km / 62 miles)

The day begins with a trip to the village of Trakai, home to the people of Karaites, which was transferred here from Crimea by the Grand Duke Vytautas. Visit a medieval castle, which is situated on a small island connected to the mainland by a picturesque bridge. Return to Vilnius and lunch in the Old Town. In the afternoon you will get a close view of the monumental sights of Vilnius, all bearing witness to the rich history of the city. They include the Cathedral, the University, which dates back to the 1570's, and the white church of Saints Peter and Paul. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Holiday Inn Vilnius or similar.

Day 4: Lithuania – Outpost of Latin Culture

(B, L, D, coach 445 km / 277 miles)

Tour proceeds to Kaunas, the former capital of Lithuania. Explore the Old Town on a walking tour. After lunch, continue towards Riga. Leaving the town of Siauliai, you will see a spectacular sight: a mound covered with thousands of big and small crosses. The locals call this place the Hill of Crosses. Dinner at a local restaurant in Riga and overnight at Hotel de Rome or similar in Riga.

Day 5: Riga – a Lesson of Architectural

Styles (B, L, D, coach 50 km / 31 miles)

The morning sightseeing introduces Riga's historic sights, which display a wide variety of architectural styles. The new part of the town – also about a hundred years old – is very interesting with its 19th-century Art Nouveau architecture. Visit to ethnographic open-air museum, which exhibits the life and culture of Latvia. Dinner at a local restaurant and overnight at Hotel de Rome or similar in Riga.

Day 6: The City of Eternal Youth

(B, L, D, coach 470 km / 292 miles)

On your way from Riga to Tartu, you will cross the border in Valga, which is a divided city. 8000 of the inhabitants live in Latvia and 2000 in Estonia. Tartu is the oldest city and the scientific centre of Estonia, also known as the city of eternal youth, as it is always full of young university students. The renowned University was established in the early part of the 17th century. After lunch, journey back to Tallinn through rural landscapes dotted with farmhouses and windmills. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Viru or similar in Tallinn.

Day 7: Back to Helsinki

(B, L, coach, catamaran 70 km / 43 miles)

Morning at leisure and lunch at a local restaurant in the Old Town. Late afternoon arrival in Helsinki by catamaran.

St. Petersburg by Train 2005

Majestic palaces, extravagant mansions and richly decorated cathedrals, create a regal ambience all around St. Petersburg, one of the most beautiful cities on the globe. A multilingual Finnish tour leader will accompany you throughout the tour, which introduces the main sights of the city in four days.

Departures

Mondays

April 18	September 5, 19
May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	October 10
June 6, 13, 20, 27	November 14
July 4, 11, 18, 25	December 30*
August 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	

Duration

4 days / 3 nights

Visa for Russia

A visa is compulsory for all passengers on the tours to Russia. Each passenger must apply for the visa in his/her country of domicile. The visa application must be accompanied by confirmation documents provided by Finland Travel Bureau. To obtain the necessary visa support letter, FTB needs to know the personal data of each passenger at the time of booking (i.e. surname, first names, date of birth, sex, nationality and passport number). A handling fee of € 25 is charged for the visa support letter per party traveling together.

Meeting Point and Time in Helsinki

Railway station by the "Sibelius" train to St. Petersburg 30 minutes prior to departure.

Prices per Person

May, June, July, August

In shared twin room	€ 800
Single supplement	€ 150
Extra bed for 3 rd person	€ 730

April, September, October, November, December

In shared twin room	€ 740
Single supplement	€ 130
Extra bed for 3 rd person	€ 700
*Supplement for December 30	€ 200

Tour Includes

- accommodation in twin-bedded business rooms with bath or shower at tourist-class hotel Moskva or similar
- 4 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 3 dinners
- transportation between Helsinki and St. Petersburg by the Finnish "Sibelius" train in second-class compartments
- railway station transfers in St. Petersburg
- excursions in Russia are guided in English
- sightseeing, visits, excursions and entrance fees according to the program
- multilingual tour leader starting from Helsinki
- service charges and taxes on included items

Day 1: Czarist Colors

(B, D, Train)

After boarding the very early Finnish Sibelius train from Helsinki to St. Petersburg you will enjoy breakfast. Upon arrival in the "Venice of the North", the orientation tour takes you to the Bronze Horseman, Admiralty, Nevski Prospekt and Palace Square. On Palace Square you will admire the harmonious unity of St. Petersburg. The architects of the city gave colors an essential role in their plans and this magnificent Russian city owes much of its special atmosphere to these painted façades. The tour continues to the very roots of St. Petersburg. The city was founded by Peter the Great, as he laid the foundation of the first fortress on an islet in 1703. This island, the Peter- and Paul Fortress, has become the chief monument to its founder's reign. Dinner and overnight at tourist-class hotel Moskva or similar.

Day 2: Along Canals and Boulevards

(B, L, D, Coach)

The day begins with an excursion to the Hermitage. The Hermitage was established in the year 1764, as Catherine II bought paintings made by famous Dutch painters. After the revolution in 1917 the amount of exhibits tripled and now it contains 2,400,000 pieces of art. The Hermitage collection offers art lovers special highlights such as

Leonardos, Raphaels and Titians. After lunch, which is served in a local restaurant, you visit the third largest Cathedral in the whole world: the Cathedral of St. Isaac. The cathedral was designed by a French architect Auguste Montferrand and the construction took 40 years - from 1818 to 1858. Dinner and overnight at tourist-class hotel Moskva or similar.

Day 3: 18th-century Russian Luxury

(B, L, D, Coach)

In the year 1708 Peter I gave his wife Catherine Aleksejevna an estate in the outskirts of St. Petersburg. As the summer residence of Russian Czars for two centuries Zarskoje Selo, later Pushkin, was developed into one of the most magnificent and richest residences in Europe by the most famous architects and craftsmen of the time. Lunch in a local restaurant and transfer to city centre. Leisurely afternoon can be put to good use by wandering in the city like any other citizen having a day off. Dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight at tourist-class hotel Moskva or similar in St. Petersburg.

Day 4: Homeward-Bound!

(B, L, Train)

Spend your last morning at leisure. After lunch at the hotel, transfer to the railway station and afternoon departure to Helsinki, where you arrive late in the evening.

Czarist St. Petersburg 2005

Valid until 31 March 2006

An independent tour by train allowing you to explore the "Venice of the North" at your own pace. The comfortable ride through the countryside of southeastern Finland takes less than seven hours by the Finnish "Sibelius" train.

Departures

Daily on request

Duration

3 days / 2 nights

Departure Point and Time in Helsinki

Board the early morning "Sibelius" train at the main railway station.

Visa for Russia

A visa is compulsory for all passengers on the tours to Russia. Each passenger must apply for the visa in his/her country of domicile. The visa application must be accompanied by confirmation documents provided by Finland Travel Bureau. To obtain the necessary visa support letter, FTB needs to know the personal data of each passenger at the time of booking (i.e. surname, first names, date of birth, sex, nationality and passport number). A handling fee of € 25 is charged for the visa support letter per party traveling together.

Tour Includes

- accommodation in renovated twin-bedded rooms with bath or shower in the chosen tourist-class hotel
- 2 x breakfast
- transportation between Helsinki and St Petersburg by the Finnish "Sibelius" train in second-class compartments
- transfers in St. Petersburg by private car and with local guide
- 3-hour sightseeing tour guided by a local guide
- service charges and taxes on included items

Note! This is a non-escorted tour.

Day 1: City of the Czars

(train, private car)

On arrival in St. Petersburg, a local guide will accompany your transfer by private car to your hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to explore this exciting city on your own. Former czarist palaces, extravagant mansions, and richly decorated churches create an imperial ambience all around the city, which used to be the home of the Russian czars for two hundred years. Overnight at Hotel Moskva or at Hotel Angleterre.

Day 2: Guided City Tour

(B, private car)

Breakfast at the hotel. The guided sightseeing tour covers the most essential sights of this magnificent Russian city, such as the Peter-and-Paul Fortress, the city's founding

Prices per Person

Hotel Moskva – Business Class Rooms

1 Jan – 15 May 2005 and 1 Sep 2005 – 31 Mar 2006

In shared twin room	€ 460
Single supplement	€ 235
Extra bed	€ 390

Additional nights

Twin room per person	€ 82
Single room	€ 165
Extra bed	€ 65

16 May – 31 Aug 2005

In shared twin room	€ 530
Single supplement	€ 235
Extra bed	€ 390

Additional nights

Twin room per person	€ 112
Single room	€ 165
Extra bed	€ 65

Hotel Angleterre – Superior Rooms

1 Jan – 14 May 2005 and 16 Jul 2005 – 31 Mar 2006

In shared twin room	€ 610
Single supplement	€ 380
Extra bed	on request

Additional nights

Twin room per person	€ 150
Single room	€ 280
Extra bed on request	

15 May – 15 Jul 2005

In shared twin room	€ 710
Single supplement	€ 480
Extra bed	on request

Additional nights

Twin room per person	€ 200
Single room	€ 380
Extra bed on request	

monument; the brilliant St. Isaac's Cathedral, decorated with more than 500 paintings, sculptures and mosaics by Russian masters; and the onion-domed Church of the Bleeding Saviour.

After the guided tour you will have plenty of time to enjoy a leisurely stroll along the bustling avenue of Nevsky Prospekt. The city also offers a multitude of delights for art and culture lovers. Overnight at Hotel Moskva or at Hotel Angleterre.

Day 3: Return to Helsinki

(B, private car, train)

After breakfast at the hotel you have the opportunity to do some last minute shopping or sightseeing. In the afternoon, guided transfer by private car to the railway station and return to Helsinki with arrival late in the evening.

Terms and Conditions

Tour Price:

Prices are quoted in Euro (€). All tour costs are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on 15 August 2004 and are subject to change. Tour prices are commissionable to tour operators. Child prices apply to children under 12 years in extra bed sharing the room with two adults.

Services Included in Tour Price:

The tour price includes transportation according to program, accommodation in hotel rooms for 2 persons (twin, double or combi), meals as defined in the itinerary, sightseeing and entrance fees according to program, services of multilingual tour leader except on non-escorted tours, taxes and service charges. The tour price does not include beverages or personal items not included in the itinerary.

Taxes and Service Charges:

All taxes and service charges for items specified in the tour itinerary are included in the tour price.

Booking Conditions:

A non-refundable deposit of € 50 per person will secure and hold reservations for your Friendly Finland Tour. The balance of payment is due 60 days before departure. Full payment is due at the time of booking if the reservation is made 60 days or less before the departure date. You should make your reservations as early as possible to ensure the dates of your choice.

Cancellations and Refunds:

Cancellations must be made in writing to Finland Travel Bureau Ltd. If you cancel any of the following tours **Scenic Finland, Saimaa Lake, Lapland Summer Experience, Highlights of Helsinki and Tallinn, Polar Safari Adventure, Winter's Tale, Arctic Circle Impressions, Night in an Igloo under the Northern Lights, Christmas at the Arctic Circle or New Year in Northern Lapland**

- at least 21 days prior to departure: full refund, except € 50 per person administration fee
- 20-08 days prior to departure: 50% refund
- 07-01 days prior to departure: 20% refund.
- Cancellation on the day of departure, no show or interrupted tour: no refund.

If you cancel your **North Cape Tour**

- at least 60 days prior to departure: full refund, except € 50 per person administration fee
- 59-35 days prior to departure: 80% refund,
- 34-15 days prior to departure: 50% refund,
- 14-01 days prior to departure: 20% refund.
- Cancellations on the day of departure, no show or interrupted tour: no refund.

If you cancel your **St. Petersburg by Train, Czarist St. Petersburg or Best of the Baltic's tour**

- at least 35 days prior to departure: full refund, except € 50 per person administration fee
- 34-15 days prior to departure: 50% refund
- 14-02 days prior to departure: 20% refund
- Cancellations made less than 02 days prior to departure, no show or interrupted tour: no refund.

Please note that these cancellation terms are applied also in the event of your visa application being refused by the Russian or Baltic authorities.

If, for any reason, Finland Travel Bureau Ltd. cancels the tours, your money will be fully refunded, in which case Finland Travel Bureau Ltd. has no further obligation.

Visa for the Baltic Countries:

Citizens of some nations need a visa for entry into one or all three of the Baltic Countries. It is of extreme importance that you check the up-to-date visa requirements at the time of booking your tour.

Visa For Russia:

A visa is compulsory for all passengers on the tours to Russia. Each passenger must apply for the visa in his/her country of domicile. The visa application must be accompanied by confirmation documents provided by Finland Travel Bureau. To obtain the necessary visa support letter, FTB needs to know the personal data of each passenger at the time of booking (i.e. surname, first names, date of birth, sex, nationality and passport number). A handling fee of € 25 is charged for the visa support letter per party traveling together.

Tour Arrangements in Finland and Norway:

Tour guides: Every Friendly Finland Tour group will be accompanied by a multilingual tour leader when mentioned in the tour inclusions. The Polar Safari Adventure, Winter's Tale, Arctic Circle Impressions, Night in an Igloo under the Northern Lights, Christmas at the Arctic Circle, New Year in Northern Lapland and Lapland Summer Experience tours will not be accompanied by a tour leader, but the excursions will be guided by local guides.

Hotels: Carefully selected first-class hotels. The standard of Norwegian hotels varies from tourist class to first-class. In Northern Norway single rooms cannot be guaranteed.

Tour Arrangements in Russia:

Tour guides: Every St. Petersburg by Train Tour group will be accompanied by a multilingual tour leader; excursions will be guided in English by local guides. The Czarist St. Petersburg Tour is not escorted; transfers and city tour in St. Petersburg will be guided by local guides.

Hotels: Moderate tourist class hotels. Single rooms cannot be guaranteed.

Tour Arrangements in the Baltic Countries:

Tour guides: Every Friendly Finland Tour group will be accompanied by a multilingual tour leader. Excursions are guided in English by local guides.

Hotels: Superior tourist-class hotels. Single rooms cannot be guaranteed. Note! The quality of hygiene and cleaning does not always reach the western standards.



Meal Plan:

Finland: The hotel breakfast is typically a Finnish buffet breakfast, though the contents of the buffet table vary slightly from one hotel to another. Lunch and dinner are always 2- or 3-course menus including coffee.

Norway: The hotel breakfast is a Scandinavian buffet breakfast. Dinner is a 2- or 3-course menu.

Russia: Breakfast at hotels in St. Petersburg is a continental breakfast. Lunch and dinner in Russia are usually 3-course menus but the quality of the food may not always reach western standards.

Baltic Countries: The hotel breakfast is a buffet table. Lunch and dinner are 3-course standard menus, the quality of which may not always reach western standards.

Baggage and Porterage:

One piece of luggage per person is allowed on Friendly Finland Tours. Each passenger is also allowed one carry-on bag. Porterage for one bag per person is included in the tour price except on the winter tours. Baggage is carried at owner's risk. Friendly Finland Tours is not responsible for loss, theft or damage. Baggage insurance is strongly recommended.

Responsibility:

All the tours are guaranteed on the dates specified but Finland Travel Bureau Ltd. reserves the right to recheck the booking status, to decline, to accept or retain any person on the tour, and eventually cancel the tour and inform all parties concerned, thereof, one month prior to the departure date at the latest.

All tour costs are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on 15 August 2004 and are subject to change. We reserve the right to change the prices in the event of devaluation of the euro, increase in taxes or service charges, or other such events beyond our control. We cannot assume responsibility for acts of omission of any person or firm other than Finland Travel Bureau Ltd. The operator is not responsible for accidents, loss, detention, annoyance, delays and expenses arising from the same, quarantine, strikes, force majeure, failure of boats or coaches to arrive and depart as scheduled, disturbances, government restrictions or regulations, weather conditions, and other eventualities over which we have no control. The hotel names mentioned in the program are suggestive and subject to changes according to the booking situation. Timetables are subject to change. Reasonable changes in the itinerary may be made by Finland Travel Bureau Ltd. where deemed advisable for the comfort and well-being of the passengers.

General Information

Weather Conditions

Due to the warm Gulf stream, the climate in Finland is considerably milder than at the same latitudes in other parts of the world, and the climates in North, East, South and West Finland are slightly different from each other. In the north and east the winter is cold but dry whereas the winter in the west and south coast is quite mild. The summer in the north is short and intensive. The summer begins in South Finland at the beginning of June and ends by mid-September. It is warm, but not humid. In North Cape, Norway, the sun is above the horizon from May 10 to July 25. However, you can experience "the White Nights" until mid-August after which the days shorten rapidly. The weather in St. Petersburg and in the Baltic Countries is similar to that of East Finland - in the coastal areas moderate to high wind, otherwise warm.

Snowmobile Safaris

A person driving a snowmobile has to be at least 15 years old and in possession of a valid driving license, which must be shown upon request. Children under 15 years old are seated in a sledge pulled by snowmobile.

The driver of the snowmobile is held liable for damages caused to the vehicle. The self-risk amount is € 505. The duration and length of the safaris are subject to change without prior notice according to prevailing weather and snow conditions.

Our snowmobile safaris include:

- The use of a snowmobile, which is reliable and easy to handle and drive, even for beginners, including fuel and necessary maintenance. Each snowmobile is shared by two persons taking turns in driving.
- The use of thermal overalls, boots, scarves, caps, woolen socks, gloves, goggles, and helmets on loan basis.
- Professional safari leader who is first-aid trained and possesses necessary mechanical skills.
- Traffic insurance as required by Finnish law with coverage for personal injury.

Insurance

For your own protection make sure that you have valid travel insurance when traveling abroad. (Insurance on snowmobile safaris, see above.)

Special Conditions on Air Travel

The costs of the program include Finnair domestic flights when such flights are specified in the itinerary. The fares used are special domestic fares that are available only in conjunction with Finnair's international flights.