

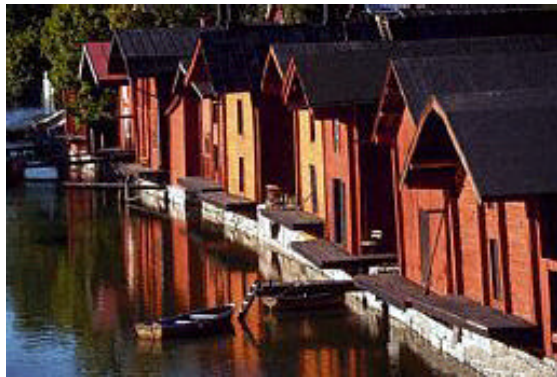
# Finland

**Finland** is a modern Scandinavian country, numbering among the ten richest in the world. It is an industrial country, but also offers much unspoiled scenic beauty and glorious wildlife. Towns and urban areas are safe, water is clean and air is fresh. Sports are second nature to the Finns and you can choose from an abundance of sports activities. You can also learn a lot of skills in Handicrafts, or develop yourself in other cultural areas. Finnish design, music and architecture are world-famous.

Finnish people are easygoing and hospitable, and families are mostly close-knit. Finnish culture is not as verbal as many other cultures and good thinking is valued more. "Speaking makes silver, quietness gold."



**Finland**  
Unique and different



**Beautiful**  
Nature



**Area:** 336,700 km<sup>2</sup> (130,000 sq. mi), including the Åland Islands. This is about twenty times smaller than Australia. Forests, lakes and rivers dominate the Finnish landscape. About 70% of the area is covered by forests and 10% by water. Finland has approximately 65,000 lakes.

**Climate:** Summers are short with the long "white nights" of high latitudes. Winters are cold and snowy.

**Population:** 4.8 million, the second lowest density rate in Europe. Due to the extreme northern location of Finland, however, more than half the population lives in the southern one-tenth of the country.

**History:** A mission, sent to the king of Sweden, brought the heathen Finnish tribes into contact with the Christian religion and under Swedish rule for centuries. It also made Finland a contiguous battlefield between the West and the east. As a result of one of these many wars, Finland became an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Czar in 1809, with its own constitution, civil service, army, and currency. In connection with the revolution in Russia, Finland declared independence in 1917 which was only a logical conclusion to the earlier development of national identity.

The twenty years that followed were times of strong economic and social progress. During World War II., Finland twice fought the Soviet Union: in 1939-40 and again 1941-44. As a result of these wars, Finland had to cede one-tenth of its land to the Soviets and resettle over 400,000 citizens from these areas. In 1948, Finland signed a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union which acknowledged Finnish neutrality.

Being a Nordic nation, Finland shares the values of freedom, democracy, and equality with her Scandinavian neighbours. Finland keeps outside the conflicts of interest between the great powers and maintains good relationships with all nations. Finland has also hosted many important international meetings for security and co-operation.

**Religion:** The two state churches are the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Orthodox Church of Finland. Currently, 91.5% of the population belongs to the Lutheran Church and 1.2% to the Orthodox Church. There are also small groups of Roman Catholics and Protestant denominations. Indifference towards organised religion is increasing.

**Economy:** Over the past 20 years, Finland has had a rapid economic growth and a rise in its standard of living. This has led to urbanisation and changes in production. Foreign trade is of great significance. Wood and paper, as well as metal and engineering, are the key industries. Finland is the world's leading manufacturer of icebreakers and oil rigs. Several newspapers of other countries are printed on Finnish paper. The clothing, electronics, and chemical industries are also growing in importance.



## Enduskunta

Finnish Parliament

Finland's remote location, sparse population and extremes of climate put special demands on transportation and communications. The key ports are kept open by a large fleet of icebreakers. The domestic airline network is one of the densest in Europe and flight connections to chief industrial countries all over the world are frequent. Automated communications are possible with all parts of the world and other electronic communication systems are of top international quality.

**Language:** Languages Over 93 % of the population speaks Finnish, a member of the Finno- Ugrian language family. Swedish, although only spoken as a mother tongue by about 7% of the people, is also an official language. There are also small minorities that speak Lappish as a native language. English is widespread.

## Finnish

Hyvää huomenta.....	Good morning
Hyvää iltaa.....	Good evening
Kuinka voit?.....	How are you?
Nimeni on.....	My name is
Ole hyvä.....	Please
Kiitos.....	Thank you
Ole hyva.....	You're welcome
Nakemiin.....	Goodbye
Kyllä.....	Yes
Ei.....	No

*Students who travel to Finland will have experiences that they will never for-get!  
YFU-Finland welcomes YOU*

Recreation: The hobbies of many Finns include some sport in one form or other: skiing, ice hockey, slalom or skating in winter, and soccer/football, basketball, track and field in summer. Reading and watching TV are also very popular. Almost every town or village has an amateur drama club, choir, folk dance or folk music group.

Finnish festivals, the high point of the summer's cultural events, include a number of concerts, art exhibitions, operas, plays, folk music and dance, jazz, as well as displays of crafts all over Finland.

Finns have about one month vacation/holiday in the summer and a week in the winter. In the summer, they spend a lot of their time in their summer cottages, far away from the pressure of everyday life. There they enjoy saunas, swimming, boating, fishing, picking berries, and just relaxing in general.



## Finns

Sports lovers



## Helsinki

Capital City

### YFU Host Families

Finnish host families are mainly typical middle-class families from all walks of life. In most cases at least one parent speaks some English. Host families are recruited throughout the year from all over Finland. They are selected to host according to the detailed information on their application and the results of an interview in their home by a YFU representative. Every host family gets a special written host family information package and an orientation lasting one afternoon during the post-arrival orientation of their student. During the year, host families have several regional get-togethers where concerns can be addressed and rules and policies discussed with YFU representatives.

### YFU Activities

Arrival orientation (year/semester students 6-7 days, summer student 4 days) for all incoming students together is held near or in Helsinki. The orientation is especially designed for young people, e.g., different types of group work, (simulation) games and learning-by-doing methods are used. Students have Finnish lessons every day, culture and history classes, sports and sauna and of course lots of fun with YFU volunteers and returnees. Accommodations are either in hotels/hostels or in temporary host families.

Mid-Year orientation (year students 34 days) is held in January or February in some towns. A great reunion for students! It is a very useful forum to evaluate the past 6 months and to share the same feelings. It will help students to become aware of the progress in themselves and to think about ways to make the best out of the end of the year.



## Different

Ways of life

The program includes Finnish lessons, discussions on their experience in the Finnish culture, some sightseeing and an evening program with returnees. Accommodations are either in hotels/hostels or in temporary host families.

A trip to Lapland is made in April. Part of the fun is to travel by bus through Finland and have YFU students pin the group during the way up. Above the Arctic Circle students will face northern landscape and different ways of life. In Lapland, during the winter months, the sun never rises and during the summer the sun never goes down. This is an unforgettable experience.

There is an optional cruise to St. Petersburg offered to year and summer students for 3-4 days at their own cost. This is an exciting cruise over the Baltic Sea to the old and historical city of St. Petersburg in Russia. The cruise gives students a chance to see Russian culture - past and present. Students will also learn more about

## Other Facts

In regard to language, it IS possible to learn Finnish and the students usually have a working knowledge of the language in six months. Students are given a good start in the orientation by experts in the Finnish language.

Students usually have the chance to continue language studies after orientation. Many schools offer "Finnish for Foreigners" language courses that go on the entire semester. Students have to pay a small fee and purchase their books.

Young people like to go out - participate in sports, see movies, go to discos. Finnish music is popular but so is international rock music. Finns are sport-minded people who especially enjoy winter sports. There are lots of festivals and events during the summer months. Sauna and summer cottages play an important part in the



# Finland

Welcomes you

