

New Year's in Finland

6 Days | Starts/Ends: Kuhmo



NEW YEAR TOUR: Make New Year's Eve one to remember with a week-long stay in Kuhmo in Finland. Go snowshoeing in the forest, be introduced to husky and horse sleigh riding, and head into a winter wonderland by snowmobile. Enjoy fireworks and a disco for New Year's Eve and take advantage of daily jacuzzis and saunas.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Enjoy a taster session of lots of winter activities, including a horse sleigh, reindeer sleigh, and snowmobile ride
- Take an included 2-hour snowshoe tour through the beautiful frozen Taiga forest and across a frozen lake
- Celebrate the start of a new year with a delicious gala dinner and disco, with a DJ and fireworks at midnight!
- Make use of the toboggans, sleds and other included equipment on New Year's Day before we enjoy a concert at the Kuhmo Arts Centre

What's Included

- 5 nights at the Hotel Kalevala (3 star)

- 4 breakfasts, 1 brunch, 3 lunches and 5 dinners (inclusive of a New Year's Eve Traditional Gala Dinner)
- Welcome drink
- Arrival and departure transfer from Kajaani airport on days 1 and 6
- 2 hour snowshoeing tour
- Traditional tin casting and fortune teller on New Year's Eve
- Entrance to Kuhmo Arts Centre and concert on New Year's day
- Daily evening saunas and jacuzzis
- Free use of kick-sledges, toboggans, DVDs, Playstation2 and Nintendo Wii games, Wi-Fi and board games

What's Not Included

- Items of a personal nature and additional meals
- International flights to/from our tour start/end points and visas
- Tipping - An entirely personal gesture
- Optional excursions

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Welcome to Finland



29 December 2022. Upon arrival at Kajaani Airport you will be met and transferred to the Hotel Kalevala in Kuhmo. The transfer is approximately one and a half hours. Upon arrival at the hotel you will check in, enjoy a welcome drink and have dinner.

Overnight - Kuhmo (D)

Day 2 : Try some winter activities



This morning we will have breakfast together with our host who will explain to you how the next few days will go

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and introduce you to the optional activities on offer. After breakfast this morning we will get a chance to have a taster of some of the available activities. You will take a short horse sleigh, reindeer sleigh ride and snowmobile ride. We'll then get a real taste of this winter wonderland as we try our hand at snow shoeing on a 2-hour snowshoe tour along the Taiga forest and across the frozen lake before enjoying a cup of hot juice.

This afternoon is free to try your hand at lots of different winter activities from Nordic walking to cross country skiing to husky safaris. We can also take advantage of the saunas and jacuzzi.

Overnight - Kuhmo (B, L, D)

Day 3 : New Year's Eve



After breakfast this morning is at leisure to join some optional activities or relax before tonight's New Year celebrations. Later on, we sit around the fire in the lobby and watch some tin casting - a tradition on new year's eve to make little horseshoes as a sign of good luck. There will also be a fortune teller on hand to tell you about your future for the following year.

This evening there is a New Year Gala Dinner and disco. Just before midnight we'll move into the winter garden to enjoy the fireworks and the countdown to the New Year. The party will continue inside in the bar with dancing and a DJ.

Overnight - Kuhmo (B, L, D)

Day 4 : New Year's Day



Happy New Year! This morning enjoy a lie in as there will be a late breakfast/brunch served today. It is a free day to relax and enjoy some more optional activities if you wish. Otherwise you can just recover from last night's revelry and enjoy the hotel's facilities including the wellness area. You may wish to watch the Kick Sled competition that will be taking place in the village today.

Before dinner, we will head out to the New Year's Day concert at the Kuhmo Arts Centre - a short bus drive away.

Overnight - Kuhmo (B, D)

Day 5 : Free day for activities

Today is at leisure for more optional activities. You can also go shopping for some last minute souvenirs or just simply relax at the hotel. Tonight we have a farewell dinner with your fellow guests. You'll also have the opportunity to take a final dip in the jacuzzi or head for the sauna. **Overnight - Kuhmo** (B, L, D)

Day 6 : Kuhmo

3rd January. Our amazing New Year's adventure in Finland comes to an end today. After breakfast and hotel check out, there's an included transfer back to Kajaani airport. (B)

ACCOMMODATION

Highlighted below are some of the accommodation/ hotels which we frequently use on this tour. We reserve the right to substitute these stays to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel or start point and further arrival information.

Hotel Kalevela

On the banks of Lake Lammasjarvi Hotel Kalevela - a beautiful family run hotel with on site spa. Guest rooms are comfortable with modern facilities. The hotel boasts a fantastic gourmet restaurant, 4 saunas and 2 hot tubs. The hotel can organise lots of activities like husky sledding, snow shoeing, cross country skiing etc. There is a lounge and fireplace for relaxing by and the hotel also provides kick sledges, toboggans and children's games to keep the whole family happy.



BEFORE YOU GO

Our partners

This tour is operated in conjunction with our trusted partner and you will join travellers who booked through different operators, not solely On The Go.

The sightseeing group may vary in size from 2 - 26 persons.

Visas

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 3 months from your planned date of departure from Finland, has at least two blank pages and has been issued within the last 10 years.

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UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and USA passport holders do not require a visa for a stay of less than 90 days.

Finland is part of the borderless region known as the Schengen Area and South African residents require a Schengen visa in order to enter Finland. This schengen visa must be submitted at least 15 days before their intended departure for the Schengen member states. Visa forms can be down loaded at <http://formin.finland.fi/Public/default.aspx?>

Currency

The official currency of Finland is the Euro. However please note the 1 and 2 cent coins are not used in Finland and everything will be rounded up to the nearest 5 cents. All major credit and debit cards are accepted in Finland. ATMs are found in every city, major town or resort and even some small villages.

Time & Voltage

Finland works on GMT + 2 hours. It observes daylight saving with clocks going forward at the end of March and back again at the end of October.

Standard voltage is 230 volts, 50 Hz. Primary sockets generally require Continental or European plugs, of the two round pin variety. We recommend that you pack a universal travel adaptor. You will need a voltage converter, and plug adaptor in order to use U.S. appliances.

Health Requirements

You should seek medical advice before travelling to Finland from your local health practitioner and ensure that you receive all of the appropriate vaccinations. As a guide Tetanus is recommended. The medical facilities in Finland are good and available for free to European Union citizens with a valid EHIC form or its replacement ID card.

The water quality in Finland is excellent and tap water is always drinkable

Food & Drink

Unsurprising for a nation surrounded by water, fish plays a very prevalent role in Finnish cuisine with salmon and herring often playing a starring role. Meat is also widely eaten with delicacies including reindeer, elk and bear. More commonly found is the HK Sininen Lenkki sausage. Many main meals are served with potatoes, berry sauce and gherkins/pickles and rye bread is often the bread of choice.

Alcohol is fairly expensive in Finland (compared to continental Europe) however it is very easy to find. Local beers like Lapin Kulta, Karjala and Olvi are easily found in local supermarket – they are branded by their alcohol content though. I is the weakest and cheapest whereas IV is the strongest and no doubt the most expensive. Anything harder than beer needs to be bought at Alko – a government run chain of supermarkets. They hold the monopoly on where you can buy anything pretty much over 4.7% in Finland.

Daylight in Finland

Due to its location in northern Europe with the Arctic Circle crossing the north of the country, parts of Finland experience both extremes when it comes to daylight. The northern part of the country (Lapland) that sits above the Arctic Circle has at least one day a year when the sun never sets (usually mid to the end of June) and one day when the sun doesn't even appear (usually mid to the end of December).

Helsinki in the south has the least extreme of the daylight hours but still sees a lot more than most European capitals in the summer and a lot less in the winter. The earliest you are likely to see the sun rise in Helsinki is about 4am in the middle of June, on top of this you can enjoy up to 19 hours of daylight with the sun not setting until just before 11pm. The winter is obviously a very different story with the latest the sun rises being about 9:30am in

late December, early January. The sun generally sticks around for just shy of 6 hours before setting around 3:15pm. After January the daylight increases slowly until June and then begins to decrease again until it's December again.

In Rovaniemi (the capital of Lapland) the story is a bit more intense. In June and most of July you'll be unlikely to see much darkness. From mid July the sun rises at about 2am and doesn't set until about 00:45am. Towards the end of December the sun doesn't tend to rise until 11:45am and barely sticks around for an hour, setting at 12:32 in the afternoon. As with Helsinki the daylight increases moderately from January to June and then decreases again in the second half of the year.

What to Pack

For an extensive list on what to bring when travelling to Finland during winter see our Lapland Packing List on our Travel Guide on our website.

- Walking boots or snow boots (avoid wellies/gum boots), woollen socks (Merino if possible – avoid cotton)
- Long johns (wool or polyester – avoid cotton), jogging/sweat pants and ski trousers or waterproof trousers.
- Base layer (wool or polyester – avoid cotton), fleece shirts, woollen jumper.
- A down parka is ideal but pricey, otherwise a down shell jacket or a similar insulated jacket.
- Hat, gloves and mittens, scarf and balaclava (optional)
- Padded bag for camera
- Spare batteries and SD cards
- Swimming costume/trunks/swimming shorts if you plan to visit a sauna when you are in Finland

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