



Why Finland?

Experience something different with the Nordic people of Finns! An exchange in Finland gives you a unique opportunity to grow and to learn new about the world in a culture that not so many people know beforehand.

Finland will welcome you warm-heartedly and offer you the chance to explore:

- one of the best-rated educational systems in the world
- mythical, pure nature with thousands of lakes and vast forests full of adventures
- exceptional seasonal variation: the warm and sunny summer, the snowy winter, the colourful autumn and the blossoming spring
- an exciting new language, Finnish or Swedish, with the help of people also fluent in English
- a country with high technology and pioneering innovation and design side-by-side with unique traditions
- a culture between the West and the East with highest ratings in equality, business-competitiveness and standard of living and the lowest ratings in corruption and illiteracy
- the home of such leading figures as
 * Alvar Aalto (architect) * Martti Ahtisaari (Nobel Peace Prize winner) * Tove Jansson (writer and the mother of the Moomins) * Nightwish and HIM (rock bands) * Kimi Räikkönen (Formula 1 driver) * Linus Torvalds (inventor of the Linux computer program system)
and many more - and of course Nokia!

"The best was to learn about a new culture - you just let yourself go free and you're trying new things you maybe never thought of doing before!" - Sofia from Germany

YFU Program in Finland

YFU Finland offers the following programs:

Year Program (Aug-Jun)

Get a Deep Insight to Finnish Culture!

Duration: 11 months

Program: an arrival orientation (four days), a mid-year orientation (two-three days), a re-entry orientation (a day)

Optional trips (at own cost): YFU trips to Tallinn in December (two days) and to Lapland in March (six days)

Semester Program (Aug-Jan or Jan-Jun)

Explore Finland in a Shorter Period of Time!

Duration: 6 months

Program: an arrival orientation (two-four days), a re-entry orientation (a day)

Optional trips (at own cost): YFU trips to Tallinn in December (two days) or to Lapland in March (six days)

Summer Program (Jun-Aug)

Experience the Finnish Mid-Night Sun!

Duration: 7 weeks (no school attendance)

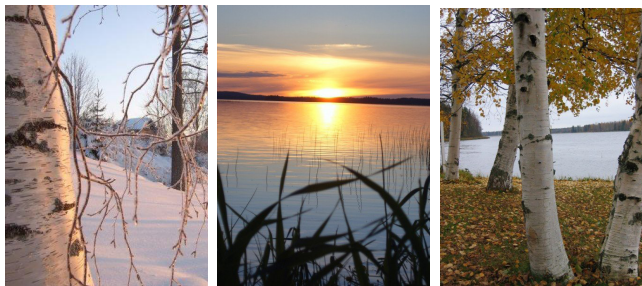
Program: an arrival orientation (four days)

Optional trips (at own cost): YFU trip to Tallinn (two days)

All YFU students will also have a pre-departure orientation in their home countries. YFU volunteers in your home area will also organise some additional activities for you to enjoy your time in Finland.

YFU Finland will help you through your exchange: each student and host family will be supported by a dedicated personal contact volunteer with YFU experience and, naturally, the YFU Finland office staff is also there to help you. In addition, YFU has an emergency phone available 24/7.

Please contact YFU in your home country to find out more about the programs (www.yfu.org).



TERVETULOA SUOMEEN! WELCOME TO FINLAND!

World... Europe... Scandinavia... Finland!



Choose something different -
become a YFU exchange student
and come to explore Finland!



www.yfu.fi

Facts and Figures

Population:	5.3 million, 15.7 inhabitants per square kilometre 71% live in towns or urban areas, 29% in rural areas a Sami population of 8,700
Official languages:	Finnish (91,5 %) and Swedish (5,5 %)
Religion:	82.4% Lutheran and about 1.1% Orthodox
Capital:	Helsinki (population of 1.25 million people in the Helsinki metropolitan area)
Territory:	338,000 km ² (fifth largest in Europe)
Nature:	10% of the land is water and 69% forest 187,888 lakes, 5,100 rapids and 179,584 islands
Climate:	temperature varies from +30) to -20 degrees (Celsius)
Type of state:	republic, parliamentary democracy independent since 1917 member of the European Union since 1995
Currency:	euro

Peculiar facts about Finland

- * Finland was the first country in the world to have women as eligible candidates for parliamentary elections and today Finland has a female president, Finnish female ministers outnumber the men and, in the parliament of 200 members, 84 are women
- * In the North of Finland the sun does not set for 73 days in the summer and does not rise for 51 days in the winter.
- * 98 % of households have mobile phones (most of them several) and 70 % are equipped with an internet connection.
- * Finns are the Number One coffee drinkers per year in the world.
- * Finland is the second-most successful country in the Olympic medal statistics

School in Finland

YFU exchange students will attend a typical Finnish high school in the Finnish or Swedish language. Don't worry, you will learn the language! Finnish schools are public and there are no tuition fees – instead, also lunch is free of charge. The Finnish education system has been ranked as one of the best in the world for years in the PISA studies by the OECD. Thus, you can expect high-quality education during your exchange.

You will have a vast range of courses to choose from. Teachers and other staff are very friendly and easily approachable so you can rely on their help. The school year begins in mid-August and ends in June and students have a break in the autumn, at Christmastime, in the spring and for Easter. Instead of schools, freetime activities are provided by local communities and independent associations. YFU strongly encourages you to find some hobbies and to try something different - it's a good way to meet new people!

"It is amazing to see how the Finnish young just talk normally to teachers and the teachers are always ready to help an exchange student. Finnish students take responsibility for their own choices at school - I really respect it!" - Juan from Mexico

Finnish Host Families

As an exchange student, the most important network for you will be a Finnish family with whom you will live as a family member, sharing their everyday activities during your exchange. YFU host families are carefully selected through a personal interview and your future host family will be chosen for you based on your characteristics, interests and wishes. YFU families live all around Finland, mostly in smaller towns, and the types of families and homes vary greatly. However, they all share the wish to get to know a new person from another culture.

Finnish families value independence, equality, responsibility and honesty. Family life in Finland is often rather hectic with family members occupied by hobbies, work and school. Most often both parents work and housemaids are rather unusual. This means that Finnish families are used to sharing household chores such as cleaning, doing the laundry and cooking. Doing things together is seen to enhance the common family spirit and to grow the children towards greater independence.

An exchange is a mutual experience – both the exchange student and the host family share a unique time together and learn from each other, which most often leads to a life-long relationship. Thus, you might be receiving many Christmas cards from the Santa Claus's country in the future!

"I've learned so much from this family. They accepted me into their household almost immediately, and included me in whatever they did. We did things as a family, and this showed me Finnish life as it really is; a community of people who are stereotyped as standoffish, not funny and quiet, but who are really fun loving, friendly and caring." - Susannah from the USA

Finland and its People

Finland is located in Northern Europe, between Sweden and Russia. The extraordinary Nordic nature of Finland amazes its visitors every year with glimmering lakes and dense forests. Indeed, nature is extremely important for Finns as well. Finns love outdoor activities and many families also have a summer cabin by a lake and they spend a lot of time there relaxing and enjoying the peaceful environment.

Finland is known as one of the safest and the most peaceful countries in the world. Finnish society is built on the ideals of efficiency, integrity and welfare. A typical Finn would be described as honest, trustworthy, modest and friendly. The cornerstone for the national mentality is sauna - a heated room for sweating sounds strange at first but when you try it, you can never forget that deeply purified and relaxed feeling!

Finland is a mixture of modernity and tradition, urbanisation and countryside. Finns value their roots, history and traditions, but they also strive for constant development and modernisation with Finnish companies excelling in top design and innovation. Finland offers the chance to experience both the energy of vibrant cities and the closely-knit, warm communities of smaller towns and countryside. Either way, Finns welcome the visitor with hospitality – and the distances are easily covered by an excellent railway network!

"I had so much fun in Finland and learned a lot - about me, another country, another culture, other people. The culture is just special. Everybody asked me "why Finland?" but I liked the idea to go to an "exotic" country. I am so glad that I had the chance to go abroad and I want to go back to Finland as soon as possible - it became my second home!! - Jacob from Australia