



ESCAPE INTO THE WILDERNESS



PROSPEKTORI

Catch a glimpse of a gold mine and the history of gold-mining on the Prospektor Trail.

The Prospektor Trail tells you about the history of gold-mining and the importance of gold in Saariselkä and Luttojoki. The highlight of the trail is an old gold mine established by the mining company Prospektor in 1902. At the mine, you can see an old mine shaft and a hut built on top of it, in which you can peek into the shaft and hear a recording of the sounds of work. In the yard, you can see rock piles and a mine car on rails.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

You can begin the Prospektor Trail either in Saariselkä (9 km) or Laanila (7.4 km). When leaving Saariselkä, the western section of the trail runs close to residential houses. You can also take a quick walk to the Prospektor mine and back from Laanila, which is only 2.3 kilometres in length.

The Prospektor Trail is easy to walk. It is level throughout and covered with crushed stone. Its wetland section is equipped with duckboards. The trail is wide enough for several persons to walk side by side. In winter, the Prospektor Trail is a skiing trail. In terms of its landscape, the trail is not as varied as the other trails in the area; its variations in altitude are minor and gentle. The trail runs through youngish pinewood, but here and there you can see approximately 300-year-old pines with shield-shaped bark, large branches and flat tops.

The key attraction along the trail is the Prospektor mine. To the west of the mine, the trail crosses a small branch stream of the river Latvajoki. Finland's largest gold nugget ever was found around here – the precise location is unknown – by Evert Kiviniemi in 1935. The nugget weighed 392.9 grams; a replica of it is displayed in Tankavaara Gold Museum. If you would like to extend your excursion, you can combine other trails with the Prospektor Trail.



PROSPEKTOR TRAIL

Grading: Easy

Length: From Saariselkä 9 km or from Laanila 7,4 km

Duration: From Saariselkä 3–4 hours or from Laanila 2–3 hours

Altitude difference: 40 m

Starting point: Saariselkä starting gate or Laanila

Activities: Hiking, skiing and nature observation

Services: A dry toilet and firewood shed in the yard of the Prospektor mine hut.

Sights: Prospektor mine hut

Equipment: Remember to wear good hiking shoes and dress appropriately for the weather. A snack and drinking bottle in your backpack will refresh you during your hike. In winter, the Prospektor Trail is a popular skiing trail.

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The hiking routes in the Urho Kekkonen National Park are divided into **Out onto the Fell** trails, which are easy and theme-based, and **Out into the Wilderness** trails, which are more demanding.

