Cultural Landscapes and Natural Attractions
(9 days)

Day 1: Turku – Finland’s Oldest Town, and the Gateway to the Archipelago

Down by the River Aura
Turku has many features typical of European towns that became important in the Middle Ages, including a riverfront, a market square, a castle and a cathedral. The River Aura flows through the heart of the modern city, linking the two poles of historic Turku: a formidable castle and a grand old cathedral. Most of the city's other sights also line near the river. There's plenty to do and see around town, as befits a city chosen as the European Capital of Culture for 2011.

Activities: sightseeing, thematic walking routes, rent-a-bike, paddling, explore the River Aura with a rented canoe, SUP-board or electric boat

Accommodation: [Link](www.visitturku.fi)

Day 2: The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Old Rauma; and the Bothnian Sea National Park

Enjoy Rauma's elaborately decorated wooden houses, idyllic street scenes and comfortable cafes and restaurants. This enchanting old town was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1991. Kylmäpihlaja Lighthouse Island lies out in the open sea, swept by the wind and the waves. But the island is full of life, especially during the seabirds' nesting season. Water buses run to the island daily in the summer. Kylmäpihlaja island is part of the Bothnian Sea National Park.

Activities: sightseeing, shopping, birdwatching

Accommodation: Hotels and hostels in Rauma [Link](www.visitrauma.fi)

Day 3: A Rare High Spot in Low-Lying Western Finland

Drive on from Rauma to Lauhanvuori National Park. On the way you can visit Pori and explore the town's National Urban Park. Walking on Lauhanvuori
Day 5: Natural Sights and Cultural History in the Wild Backwoods of Seitseminen National Park

Experience how crofters used to make their living in these remote backwoods at the heritage farm at Kovero. Learn about the park’s flora and fauna at the pleasant Seitseminen Nature Centre – the best place to start exploring the old forests, lakes and marshes of this fascinating part of Finland’s backwoods. Walk through the heart of Seitseminen National Park to the old-growth forest of Multiharju with its nearly 400-year-old pines, ancient spruces and stately old aspens.

Services and activities: Seitseminen Nature Centre

www.nationalparks.fi/seitseminennaturecentre

Day 6: Gorgeous Geological Sights

The landscapes of Helvetijnävijärvi National Park are dominated by geological features created millions of years ago by mighty movements deep in the Earth’s crust. After admiring the rugged cliffs around Helvetijnävijärvi (Hell’s Lake) and Helvetinkolu (Hell’s Hole) you can relax on the sandy lakeshore at Haukanhieta, or hike the Helvetistä Itään Nature Trail from Kankimäki to Helvetinkolu, geological and natural sites, campfire sites, day trip hut, equipment rental

www.nationalparks.fi/seitseminennaturecentre

Accommodation: Hotels and hostels in the Tampere area

Day 7: Outstanding Views and a Medieval Castle

Aulanko Nature Reserve near the old city of Hämeenlinna has many unique attractions. An English-style park was created here between 1883 and 1938. This area’s buildings and cultural history make it a nationally valuable site. The views over the valley of Lake Vanajavesi, as seen from the lookout tower on Aulangonvuori Hill, are considered to be a Finnish national landscape. These views are said to have inspired the famous Finnish composer Jean Sibelius to create his most widely known composition Finlandia. In summertime there is a café at the foot of the lookout tower and a kiosk by Lake Joutsenlampi. The Aulanko area forms part of Finland’s first National Urban Park, in Hämeenlinna. Hämeenlinna is a lively and pleasant town, with attractions including churches, museums, galleries and restaurants. Don’t miss the fascinating Häme Castle, one of Finland’s few surviving medieval castles.

Activities: Golf, spa, horseback riding and shopping

www.nationalparks.fi/aulanko

www.visithameenlinna.fi

www.kansallismuseo.fi

Accommodation: Spa Scandic Aulanko, hotels and hostels in the city of Hämeenlinna

Nationalparks.fi – Up-to-date information about Finnish national parks and their facilities

VisitFinland.com – The official travel guide of Finland

Outdoorsfinland.com – Find the best hiking, cycling and canoeing trails in Finland