



LAND OF THE CURIOUS



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INTRODUCTION TO FINNISH CULTURE

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STEREOTYPES OF FINNS

- Finns are fair and have blond hair.
- Finns are shy and quiet.
- Finns are not used to small talk, and they seldom smile.
- Finns don't want to stand out from the crowd.
- Finns want to conform in their manner of dress.
- Finns are very punctual in terms of time and schedules.

Stereotypes are readily available images of given group, usually based on rough generalizations. Stereotypes can be harmful, and they are resistant to change. But stereotypes can be also needful in human interaction, and they might help to explain the behavior of others when encountering a foreign culture.

THE REALITY OF OUR SOCIETIES - DIFFERENCE

People in Finland come in all shapes and sizes, like the rest of humanity.
->no nation has a completely uniform set of customs.

Almost every country has been built through integration of different cultures.

Multicultural societies are a reality, and they will be so also in the future.

Our big challenge is to discover how to live and interact with difference creatively.

A minority in one place can be majority in another place!

MOVING TO FINLAND...

**“TO A DISTANT, COLD AND MYSTICAL
COUNTRY WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE OF
A FAIR COMPLEXION AND REMAIN
SILENT FLUENTLY IN TWO
LANGUAGES.”**

What a Culture Shock!

by words of German-born writer Roman Schatz

- SAUNA, NUDITY
- HOSTILE WEATHER
- LANGUAGE
- LOW POPULATION DENSITY
- OPENING HOURS, HOLIDAYS
- MAGNETIC KEY UNIVERSITY
OPEN 24/7
- PUNCTUAL

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF FINLAND BY ROMAN SCHATZ

“When you first arrive, Finland looks like a normal, pretty, expensive little country. Well, the light and the colors are different, at least in summer. In winter there is not really any light.

But something else is different here too. It takes you a little while to really notice – it’s the people.

They don’t look you in the eyes. They never greet strangers. They hate small talk. They never interrupt you; it’s as if they’re not listening. Say something nice about their clothes and they’ll tell you how cheap those rags really were. Smile at passers-by and they think you’re a religious fanatic, on drugs, gay, about to sell them an oriental carpet – or all of the above.

You don’t believe me? See for yourself; go to a department store and spend some time in elevator. Smile, look right into people’s faces and start chatting away. You’ll see their heartbeat rise and sweat appear on their brows.

Then again, they just might invite you to their summer cottage for a sauna, which really means getting naked and royally drunk with them and their friends. With Finns it’s sometimes hard to know, whether they hate you or love you.

The secret is simple. The Finnish concept of politeness works differently than in most other countries. In most cultures it is considered polite to communicate. In Finland it is polite to leave people alone.”

AFTER THE FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF FINLAND

— Roman Schatz, German-born TV producer and writer, lived in Helsinki since 1986:

”I wouldn’t go so far as to call Finland a paradise. It’s too damn expensive and too damn cold. But to be brutally honest again: As much as I love to complain – I have never really regretted coming here.”

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF FINLAND

Peace, Silence, Conformity

Finns – Masters of Silence

The Land of Law and Order

Of all the European Union rules Finns obey 120 per cent of them.

Mobile Phones

How do you get a Finn to talk? Put a mobile phone in they hand.

Cleanliness

Finns like their homes clean and will most likely have sterilized their parquet floors for your visit.

Technology

In Finland we have this hi-tech company called Nokia, which used to make pretty good “hammers”!



FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF FINLAND

Communication and Interaction (or lack of it)

How can you tell the difference between a Finnish introvert and a Finnish extrovert? When talking, a Finnish introvert looks at his feet and a Finnish extrovert looks at your feet.

Landscape: Finland is the Land of Thousands Lakes - almost 188 000 altogether!

Climate: Finnish summer is short, but at least it doesn't snow too much.

How to dress in Finnish winter: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIEfOu7IzK4>

Daylight hours: Finland is the Land of the Midnight Sun.

Language: When you see written Finnish, you think that somebody has been sitting on the computer keyboard.

Some Finnish: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0J1yJR_CYec

Lack of people: Even on national holidays streets seem to be empty .

LIST OF ICONIC CULTURAL ASPECTS

Below are listed some of the characteristics of *Finnishness*. The term "*Finnishness*" is often referred to as the national identity of the Finnish people and its culture.

Finnish Maiden - a figure of national personification symbolizing Finland

Kalevala - the national epic of Finland and Finnish mythology in general

Kantele - traditional musical instrument

Joulupukki - Father Christmas/Santa Claus

Jean Sibelius - one of the most popular national figures, composer of the symphonic poem Finlandia

Sauna - a Finnish national institution

Sisu - will, determination, mental fortitude

Perkele – THE Finnish swear word

Ice swimming - swimming in a body of water with a frozen crust of ice

Finnish Food and Drinks:

<http://www.visitfinland.com/article/iconic-finnish-foods-of-all-time/>

Mämmi - traditional Easter food

Kalakukko - traditional food from the region of Savo

Mustamakkara - traditional blood sausage from the city of Tampere

Karelian pastries - traditional pastries from the region of Karelia

Salmiakki - salty black liquorice

Koskenkorva i.e Kossu - Finnish vodka

THE FINNS AND FINNISH CULTURE

The Finns respect hard-work and achievements, but that does not give anyone to believe they are superior. There are no hierarchies in institutions or organizations – everyone can talk to the boss.

The Finns believe in total equality, with everyone having the right to voice their opinion.

Finnish culture is quite individualistic compared to many other nations.

The Finns are not very tactile.

Gender roles are not very strictly defined in Finland.

People in Finland are punctual in terms of time and schedules.



Being humble is regarded as a plus.

The Finns, to foreigners coming from emotive cultures, seem closed and often withdrawn. The Finns are suspicious of melodrama, melodrama confuses the Finns.

Personal space in Finland is a right, not a privilege, and a handshake is always appropriate, but a hug and kissing is not.

The Finns are not very generous in dispensing compliments.

Overall, Finnish society is conservative and gentle.

The younger Finns are more informal and tolerant than their parents.

FINNISH NIGHTMARES – BEING A FINN

COMIC ABOUT UNCOMFORTABLE
SOCIAL SITUATIONS,
UNCOMFORTABLE EVERYTHING...

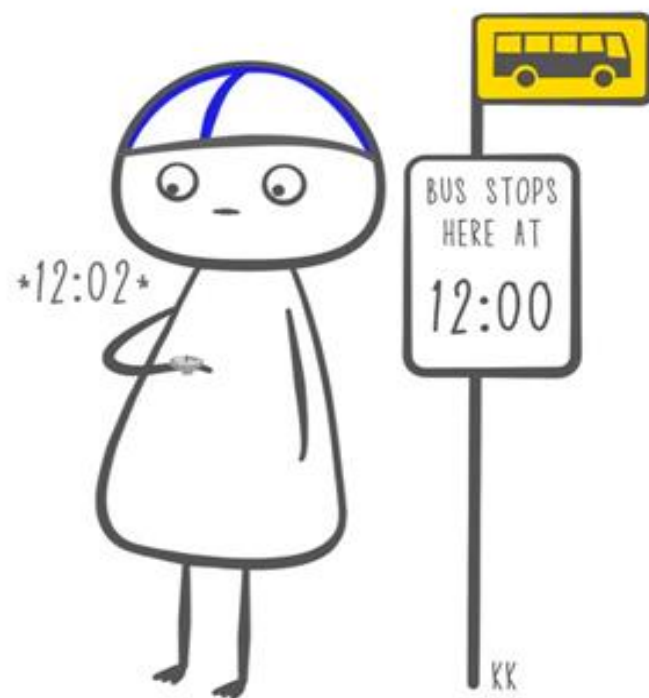
MEET MATTI, A STEREOTYPICAL FINN
WHO APPRECIATES PEACE, QUIET AND
PERSONAL SPACE.

MATTI TRIES HIS BEST TO DO UNTO
OTHERS AS HE WISHES TO BE DONE
UNTO HIM: TO GIVE SPACE, BE POLITE
AND NOT BOTHER WITH
UNNECESSARY CHIT CHAT. AS YOU
MIGHT GUESS, IT CANNOT ALWAYS GO
THAT WAY.



FINNISH NIGHTMARES

FINNISHNIGHTMARES.BLOGSPOT.FI -  FINNISHNIGHTMARES  FINN_MATTI  FINNISHNIGHTMARESOFFICIAL



PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS LATE.

FINNISH NIGHTMARES

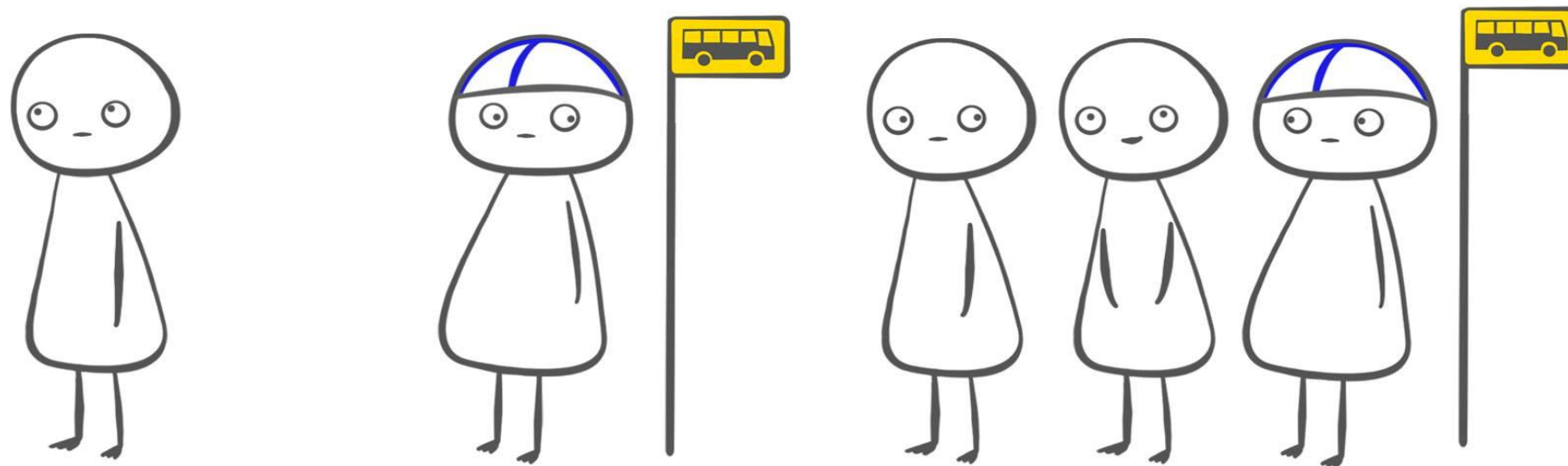
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WEATHER IS HORRIBLE, BUT THE ONLY SHELTER IS OCCUPIED.

FINNISH NIGHTMARES

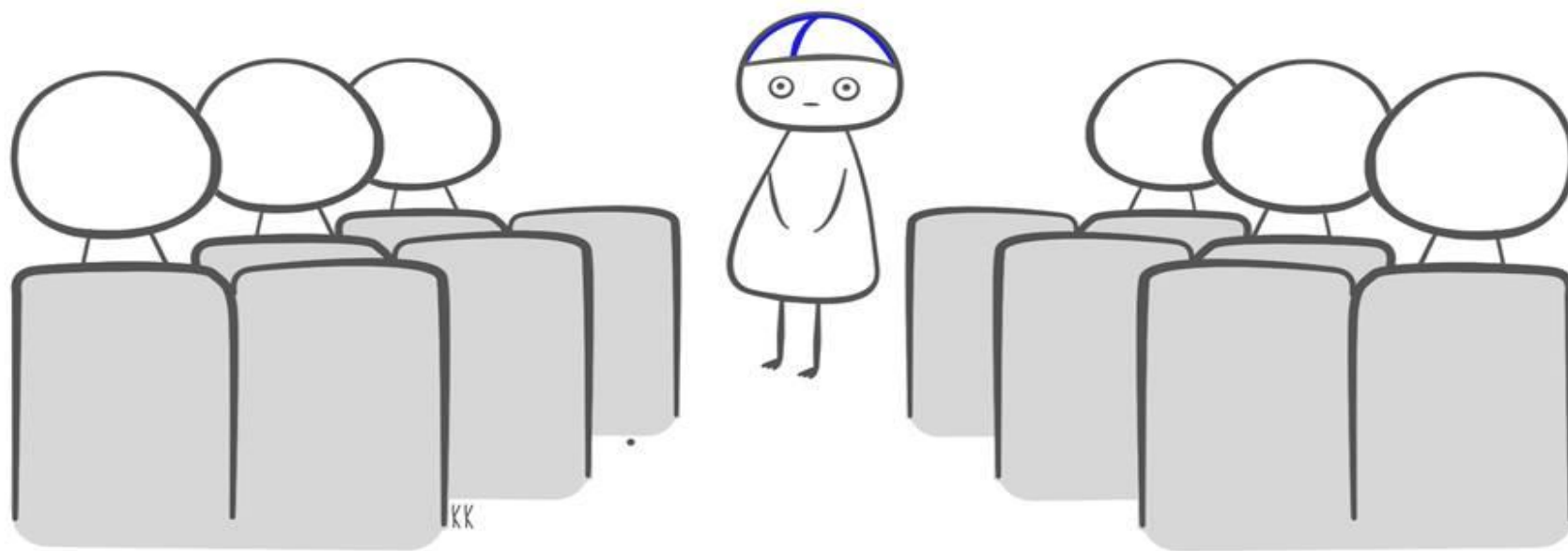
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SOMEONE INVADES YOUR PERSONAL SPACE
WHILE YOU'RE WAITING FOR BUS

FINNISH NIGHTMARES

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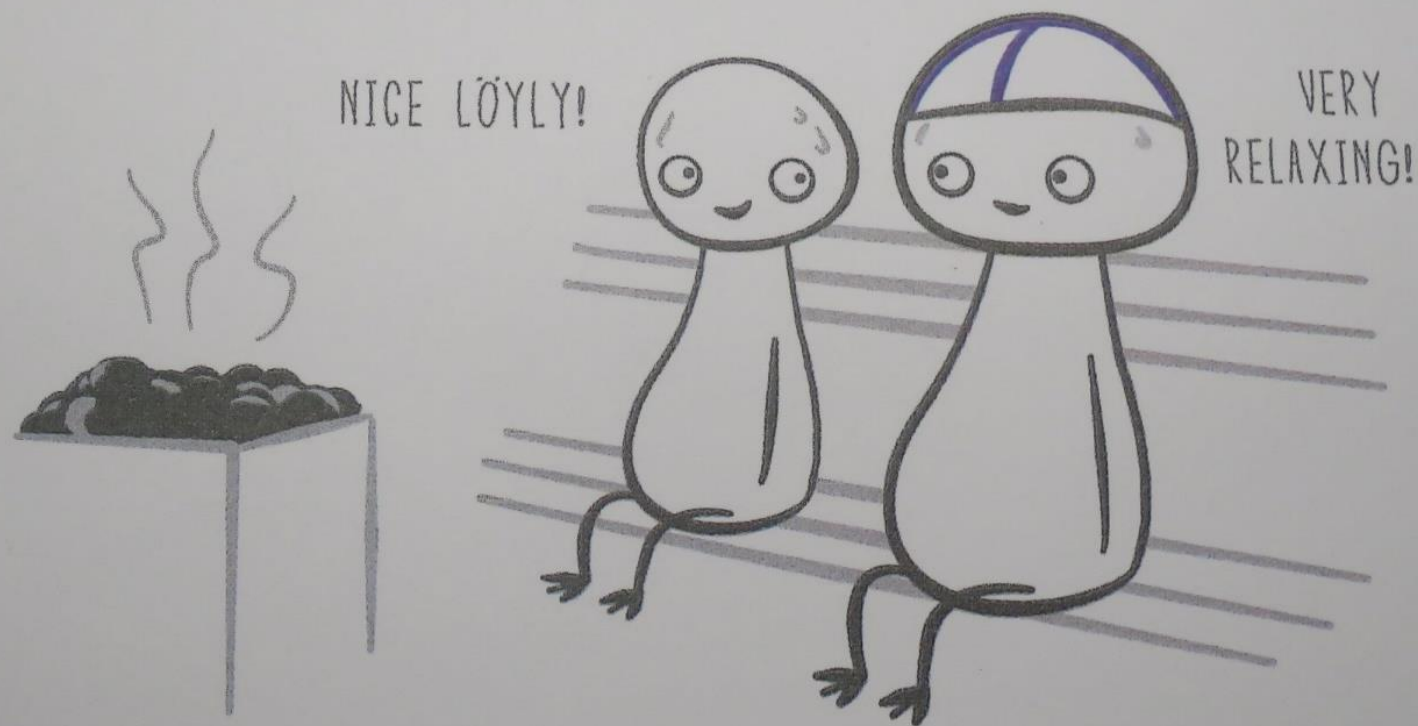


THE BUS IS "FULL".

MEANWHILE IN FINLAND



FINNISH FACTS



EVEN THE MOST RESERVED FINN
CAN BECOME CHATTY IN A SAUNA.

THE TRUTH ABOUT FINNISH SAUNA

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=I_RNFshrUDU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_RNFshrUDU)



MARMI TARVAINEN/SAUNA TOURE

10 TIPS FOR SAUNA NEWBIES (FROM WHAT TO WEAR TO WHAT TO DO)

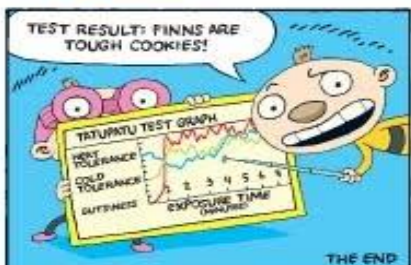
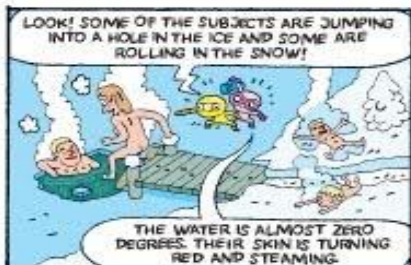
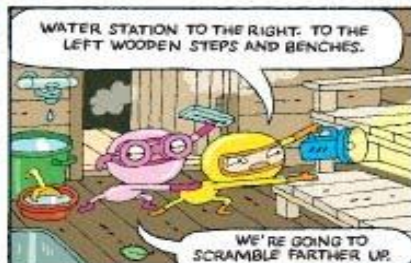
- ❖ Wood works: Finnish saunas are dimly lit and mostly made of pinewood. You rarely find colorful lights, fragrant aromas or music.
- ❖ The heat is on: The Finns like their saunas hot, usually up to 100 degrees Celsius. So, keeping hydrated and drinking lots of water is crucial.
- ❖ Keep it clean: You should always take a shower first, so you enter the sauna clean. Showering in between or taking a dip in ice-cold water or even snow is all part of the experience.
- ❖ Clothing is optional: While Finns do not hesitate to go nude (there are separate areas for men and women in public saunas), there is no obligation to strip down completely. Covering up with a towel is totally acceptable.
- ❖ Follow the vibe: While most Finnish sauna experiences involve getting naked, there is nothing sexual about it. It's about physical and spiritual cleansing and well-being. It's also about bonding and socializing, but it's a place of reflection too – take in the vibe when you enter and follow that as a social cue.

10 TIPS FOR SAUNA NEWBIES (FROM WHAT TO WEAR TO WHAT TO DO)

- ❖ Towels rule: Naked skin should not hit the pinewood of the sauna. Sauna-goers should sit on their towel or use the ones provided in many of the public sauna complexes.
- ❖ Food is fine: Seeing Finns eating and drinking in saunas is normal. This is part of the cultural experience.
- ❖ Steam to taste: There are not really rules about creating löyly (the steam that comes off the rocks after water hits them). So, if you enter a sauna and you'd like it a bit warmer, it's OK to take charge and throw some water on the stove (kivas).
- ❖ Whipping is normal: A vasta or vihta might be offered. This bunch of birch twigs is traditionally used to gently whip skin, especially over the shoulders. It is said to improve circulation.
- ❖ It's for everyone: The sauna is for everyone, men, women and children – although those with serious health conditions should seek medical advice beforehand.



Tatupatu-test
 FINNISH
 ODDITIES PART 1
SAUNA



TatuPatu-test Part 1: Sauna

from a book Tatu and Patu: This is Finland



CULTURE QUIZ

Situations in Finland

THE SILENCE OF FINNS

You are giving a presentation to a group of Finns. This is the first time you met a group of Finns. The presentation seems to go well and at the end of the presentation, you stop to ask if anyone has any questions. There is total silence. No one responds. Not a single question is asked. Do you...

- a) die on the spot and run out of the room, thinking you have been a disaster?
- b) patiently wait a few moments, hand out your business card, then invite people contact you if they would like further information?
- c) repeat your question and tell them that they really must have things to ask?

Comments: Finns are very reserved. They do not like to stand out from the crowd by speaking up. Most probably your audience were fascinated by your presentation, have lots of questions but are afraid to ask. By handing them your business card, you are enabling them to phone you to talk on a one-to-one basis about your presentation. **Answer B.** Remember you are not a disaster!

FINNISH HOME

When visiting a Finnish person's home, it is correct and polite:

- a) Not to take your shoes off.
- b) Take your shoes off.
- c) Take your shoes and socks off.

Comments: The Finns keep their shoes for outdoor wear and can often be seen walking around in their stocking feet or sandals, even at the office. **Answer B.** You should at least offer to take your shoes of.

FINNISH SAUNA

Having sauna in traditional Finnish way may mean which of the following:

- a) After a short while in the sauna, you will go ice swimming (frozen lake, a hole in the ice and off you go) and you repeat this a few times and enjoy it.
- b) A relaxing snooze in the heat, modestly attired in your swimming suit.
- c) An opportunity to gather naked, in a warm place, to meet member of the opposite sex.

Comments: The traditional way to take a sauna generally means women and men go separately. It is not customary to keep your bathing costume on in sauna as this is thought to be unhealthy. After a short while in the sauna, a Finn will either plunge into a cold swimming pool, lake or have a shower and then return to the sauna (even in the middle of winter). **Answer A.** It is thought to be very therapeutic to smear yourself with honey and be lightly whipped with birch twigs in order to stimulate the circulation. The cold water helps this as well.

AT THE FINNISH AIRPORT

You are at the airport and have been called for boarding. Everyone has their boarding tickets and, logically, has a seat on the plane. There is a large group of people huddled around the boarding gate. Do you...

- a) Find the end of the queue and wait your turn to get on the plane?
- b) Just push your way in where you can?
- c) Remember there is no seat allocation on domestic flights, and you owe it to yourself to get on the plane as soon as possible?

Comments: There are no seat allocation on domestic flights, but the Finns do queue in an orderly fashion. Jumping the queue will bring you disapproving looks. **Answer A.** In many places, there is a ticketing system to ensure people are served in order – at the post office, in banks, chemists, supermarkets and travel agencies – but not at the airport; it is a free for all. People push politely!

YOU KNOW YOU'VE BEEN IN FINLAND TOO LONG, WHEN...

Silence is fun. Silence is golden.

When you hear loud-talking passengers on the train, you immediately assume: they are drunk, they are Russian-speaking inhabitants (or Swedish-speaking in Western Finland), or they are foreign students.

80 degrees Celsius in a sauna is chilly, but 20 degrees Celsius outside is freaking hot.

Your coffee consumption exceeds 6 cups a day.

You enjoy salmiakki (Finnish salty black liquorice).

Your old habit of being "fashionably late" is no longer acceptable. You are always on time.

YOU KNOW YOU'VE BEEN IN FINLAND TOO LONG, WHEN...

■
You think it's acceptable to eat lunch at 11.00 – even at 10.30.


It doesn't surprise you to see over 300 bikes parked in a row.

You know that "men's public bathroom" is another phrase for sidewalk.

You no longer see any problem wearing white socks with loafers.

You no longer look at sports pants as casual wear, but recognise it as semi-formal wear.

YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY PEOPLE WOULD LIVE ANYWHERE ELSE BUT IN FINLAND!



The expression “when in Rome...” does not entail that you imitate Finns when you are staying in Finland. Nevertheless, being aware of what is considered socially acceptable and polite is useful in any country, Finland included.

It's not right or wrong, it is just different!



WELCOME TO FINLAND!

Finland is a land of countless lakes, forests, fells and archipelagos – it is one of the most extensive and unspoiled natural environments in Europe. Finland's air, forests, lakes and drinking water are exceptionally clean by global standards. More than 70% of Finland's land area is forest, which makes Finland one of the most forested countries in the world. The air quality in Finland is excellent because Finland is situated far from large sources of emissions and the country has successfully cut back on its own emissions. Finland has four very distinct seasons – temperatures may vary between -35°C and $+35^{\circ}\text{C}$.

Finland is the safest place in the world.

Finland ranks as the top OECD country in education.

Finland is the most advanced country in the EU in the utilisation of digitalisation.

Finland is the happiest country in the world.

Finland has the cleanest air in the world.

Finland is the water richest country in the world.

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FINNISHNESS BINGO

-
1. Who speaks Finnish?
 2. Who speaks Swedish?
 3. Who has Finnish friends?
 4. Who likes Finnish food?
 5. Who likes ice hockey?
 6. Who plays ice hockey?
 7. Who hates small talk?
 8. Who likes sauna?
 9. Who drinks a lot of coffee?
 10. Who is punctual?
 11. Who likes to ride bicycle?
 12. Who cannot understand why people would live anywhere else but in Finland? ;)

Count your points and let's find out who is the most Finnish of us! 😊

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

FINNISH SMILE



RARE AND GENUINE

