



Welcome to Wild Taiga
A World as nature intended

Finding Wild Taiga

The Wild Taiga stretches from Kuhmo to Suomussalmi and is situated in the region of Kainuu, north east of Finland. It is a region of rich culture, traditions, history and adventures.

In winter, nature's own sculptures of snow laden trees stretch as far as the eye can see. Spring sees the awakening of its most famous inhabitant, the brown bear. In summer it becomes a land of lush green surrounded by crystal clear lakes and rivers. In the fall, it bewitches with a myriad of colour. Wild Taiga is an escape to nature, which although remote in parts, gives a complete sense of well-being and safety.



Wild Taiga Association Promoting sustainable tourism

Because of its diversity, the region offers a vast range of activities all-year-round. This is catered for by the many small companies and enterprises operating under the Wild Taiga banner. These are small, personal, artisan entrepreneurs who have collated their local traditions, culture, knowledge and products, to offer visitors the best, unique experiences. No one can know the area better than they can. They are, in the main, family businesses. Younger generations are taught the skills of the trade to carry on the traditions and culture. As small business they are dependable on high level of tourist satisfaction with meaningful experiences. As locals they are very aware of the impact tourism can bring to their area and work hard to keep a good balance with the nature, their provider - In all the definition of sustainable tourism.

Accommodation

The hotels you find here are small and mainly independently run concerns.

Of course hotels aren't the only choice of accommodation. Many choose to complete their 'back to nature' experience by staying in cabins or lodges, or on farms. Some programmes even allow for outdoor stays, even in winter!

Programmes

The midnight sun, and deep crisp winters in the surrounding nature, creates a stage for exhilarating activities. You can enjoy as many experiences as you like - beginners may enjoy shorter less testing programmes, whilst the more experienced may explore more tasking week-long packages.

Most activities you join on Wild Taiga tours are suitable for the independent traveller as well as small groups, families, and our specialist 'just for 2 tours'. The organisers of the tours provide something for all seasons. Indeed you can use the same supplier for summer or winter. They also offer guaranteed departure dates.

Many of the programmes on offer are unique to Finland, hence the need of, 'experts in their field', guides. You can find programs for every taste and special family activities for even the youngest family members.



A Winter wonderland



Pristine powder snow and the crisp winter air lure you into the Wild Taiga nature. Here you can enjoy and partake in the vast array of activities and experiences.



They say that Finn's are born with skis on their feet so it's not surprising that skiing is one of the most popular winter sports with hundreds of kilometres of ski tracks. As well as skiing, you can take snowmobile rides; speeding through forests and over frozen lakes, fish in the iced lakes, walk with snow shoes or float the rapids. You can sit back and watch the nature go by on reindeer or husky sleighs.



For those intrepid travellers who prefer to stay outdoors, even after a full day of exhilarating adventures, there's an opportunity to try a hand at building an igloo and spend the night under clear skies and multitude of stars with no light pollution to spoil the view.



Summer solstice

Midnight sun and infamous brown bears

As the days get longer, activities change. Snowshoes are swapped for hiking boots, husky sleighs for husky Mercedes and husky treks, snowmobiles for quad bikes, skating on lakes for canoeing, white nature for green, ice fishing for lake fishing, eating salmon and sausage in a Kota in front of log fire to eating freshly caught fish and just picked berries outside in front of camp fire. Following tracks in the snow becomes watching the bears make a majestic appearance.

Wildlife

Europe's biggest predators

The forests of eastern Kainuu are filled with mammals, especially large carnivores which are either very rare or extinct elsewhere in Europe. Wild Taiga is one of the few areas in Europe where it is possible to watch and photograph rare majestic beasts in their natural environment.

In addition to the carnivores such as bears, wolves and wolverines, you can see moose, wild forest reindeer, flying squirrels, beavers and some of our biggest birds of prey. Under the light of the midnight sun, you can study the animals for 24hrs, should you so wish!



Culture and history



Since 1970 the **Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival** has been an essential part of the Finnish summer. Today it is one of the biggest festivals in Finland and an internationally significant music event. The festival introduces a new theme every summer with its composers and concerts.

Sommelo Music Festival, is an enthusiastic gathering of contemporary ethno musicians and traditional rune singers. Part of the programme takes place in ancient Viena Karelian folklore villages in Russia.

During '**Jolly July**' there is something to experience every day: fun, dreams, sounds, silence, excitement, company and surprises. Concerts, music and dance courses, guided nature trips, boat trips, athletics - all designed especially for children.

The battles of Suomussalmi and Kuhmo were fought between Finnish and Soviet forces in the Winter War 1939 - 1940. The outcome in Suomussalmi was a major Finnish victory against vastly superior forces. Now you can tour these pieces of history and the various experiences and museums which tell the story.



Well-being

Life at a slower pace

The Finnish Sauna is a substantial part of Finnish culture, indeed it's a Finnish word known and used worldwide. It stands to reason with such a distinction that they are the experts when it comes to Well-being. Well-being services, people and nature create a rich entity for the area which is safe and easily accessible.

True healthy eating

Know where your food comes from; nature's own table.

Another essential part of well-being is healthy food. The Fresh produce and natural ingredients such as mushrooms, berries, fish and game meat, guarantees the best dining.

You can include mushroom and berry picking in your trip and learn to make traditional Karelian pies. You can also get nearer to the produce when you go wilderness cooking, fresh fish straight from lake to plate.



Welcome!



Photos:

Front Page

Bear cubs in Martinselkosen Eräkeskus: Ben Illis
Rowing boat: Sommelo Music Festival

Accommodation

Lakeside Camping: Lentuankoski Camping
Cottage in winter: Loma Hossa
Guest room: Wanha Majuri
Wooden hotel: Karolineburg
Hikers in Hiidenportti, Hiiden Torppa

Winter wonderland

Northern Lights
Black grouses in Boreal Wildlife Centre:
Kari Kemppainen
Huskies: Norwide
The Silent People in winter: Kainuun Kuutamokeikat
Reindeer Sleigh: Hossa Reindeer Park
Yurt: Vuokatti Husky

Summer solstice

Lake: Ben Illis
Wolf in Wildlife Safaries Finland: Staffan Widstrand
Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival: Stefan Bremer
Canoe: Wilds Piira
Bear hide: Wildlife Safaries Finland

Culture and History

Kuhmo Arts Centre: Stefan Bremer
Silent People and Reijo Kela: Ella Karttimo
On the Trails of the Great Bear Festival: Ella Karttimo
Jolly July in Kuhmo: Stefan Bremer

Well-being

Starter on the plate in Vanha Kurimo: Ella Karttimo

Welcome

Kylmäluoma Hiking Centre
Fisherman, Hossa Hiking Centre: Hannu Huttu
Wolf, Boreal Wildlife Centre
Paanajärvi Village in Russia, Juminkeko
Wild Forest Reindeer, Taiga Spirit

Other pictures: Wild Taiga Photo Bank

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