



© I.K. INHA

Wild taiga

Kuhmo & Suomussalmi

The Songlands of The Kalevala

In Kainuu, the trees reach up to the sky and the dappled light filters down through their branches. The murmuring of forest streams and the soothing hum of the verdant forest greet you and lead you to the mystical beauty of this northern wilderness. It is here you find the inspiration for the Finnish national epic, The Kalevala.

The Kalevala is the Finnish national epic compiled from old Finnish ballads, lyrical songs, and oral poetry, all part of Finnish tradition. The Kalevala was compiled by Elias Lönnrot who published the folk material in two editions. Kalevala, the dwelling place of the poem's chief characters, is a poetic name for Finland, meaning "land of heroes." The leader of the "sons of Kaleva" is the wise old Väinämöinen, a powerful sage with intuitive powers, who is a master of the kantele, a Finnish stringed instrument.

In the Songlands of the Kalevala, you tread the paths once taken by Elias Lönnrot, and witness first hand where the Karelian artists of the Kalevala found their inspiration.

Kuhmo brings the Kalevala to life, with history and modernity living side by side. Kuhmo is a UNESCO City of Literature because of the Kalevala. Maybe you will be the one who finally solves the great riddle of our national epic: "Goes round the sun, goes round the moon, but cannot go round juminkeko." Could it really be about Polaris?

You may reflect on this conundrum whilst enjoying a traditional Kalevala dinner and learning about fishing lures and ancient hunting rhymes. Step onto a boat and let the waters rock you gently into the mystical world of Väinämöinen.

Otso, the King of the Forest, welcomes you to Kuhmo, initially as the mighty mythical bear and then up close, eye to eye.

Let the haunting and enchanting songs of the Kalevala lure you into the magic of the northern songlands!



JUMINKEKO



LOCAL DELICACIES



ROWING A CHURCH BOAT



MYTHICAL BEAR

© JOUKO MÄÄTTÄ

DAY 1

- Arrival at Kajaani airport
- Transfer to Kuhmo. Overnight at the lakeside Hotel Kalevala. Welcome dinner.

DAY 2

- Transfer to Juminkeko, an information centre for the Kalevala and Karelian culture. You will learn the story of the Finnish national epic.
- This is followed by lunch at the nearby Kuhmo Arts Centre.
- Return to the hotel by church boat. Everyone can have a chance of rowing if they so wish.
- A trip to Kuhmo Visitor Centre, Petola will take you to the world of bear myths.
- Because of its heavenly, divine origin, bear - Otso - has always been the most honoured animal of the wilds and king of the forest. You will learn, how the bear was respected throughout his lifetime and take part in the rituals, preparing for a hunt as well as the celebration of a successful hunt.
- There is a short walk back to the hotel and a chance to relax in the sauna. It is important to wash away all the bad luck before enjoying the evening feast.

DAY 3

- In the morning it's time to play Finnish skittles, "kyykä", a centuries-old Karelian game.
- Check-out of the hotel and transfer closer to the Russian border.
- Lunch and information of "Uljasan Pirtti". Walking tour to Gold Spring.
- Short transfer to Bear Centre. Early dinner, information about bears and the other animals it is possible to observe. Evening is at the Bear House.
- Transfer and check-in to Lentiira Holiday Village cottage accommodation.
- Small snacks available before a good night sleep.

DAY 4

- After breakfast it's time to explore the great pike myth! A guided fishing trip will take you to lake Lentiira where you can try to please Ahti, the King of waters and fishing fortune.
- After lunch we will take a hike to the forest, the source of shelter and wealth under the blessing of Tapio, a forest spirit and his wife Mielikki who is mistress of the forest. In the forest we will collect nature's produce such as herbs or birch branches for later use.
- The traditional sauna experience introduces you to the most iconic part of Finnish lifestyle in the past, present and future.
- After dinner there will be a Kalevala themed quiz, where you can test your knowledge.

DAY 5

- Breakfast, check-out
- Transfer back to Kajaani airport



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Kuhmo - City of Literature
Creative Cities Network
Member since 2019



COLLECT NATURAL HERBS

IN THE HEAT
OF A SMOKE SAUNA

VALID:

May - September

(excluding 11.-24.7.2021 and 10.-23.7.2022)

Group size: 10-15

For bigger/smaller group please ask for offer

PRICE/PERSON

Twin/Double room 1249 €

Single room 1519 €

INCLUDING:

- 2 night accommodation at Hotel Kalevala
- 2 night accommodation at Lentiira Holiday Village
- Full board
- Guided activities and transfers as in the program

MORE INFORMATION & BOOKINGS:

Hotelli Kalevala

Väinämöinen 9

FI-88900 Kuhmo

sales@hotellikalevala.fi

www.hotellikalevala.fi

+358 8 655 4100

EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDED:

Comfortable hiking shoes/trainers,
weather according outdoor clothing, backpack.

We reserve all the rights to change order of the activities or content of the program if necessary due weather conditions or safety reasons. Package price does not include personal travel insurance.