

USEFUL INFORMATION IF GOING TO FINLAND AS A TOURIST IN A PLEASURE CRAFT.



Topic	Comment
Demographic data (population/no of clubs/members/boats)	<p>5.5 million inhabitants, out of which 1.1 million in the Helsinki capital area. Finland has a distance of 1,100 km from the south to the north. The longest EU-border is with Russia – 1,340 km. 170,000 lakes (> 2,000 m²) and 180,000 islands. Totally about 39,000 km shoreline. The average depth in the Baltic Sea is only 54 m, in the Gulf of Finland it is 36 m and in the archipelago even less. Millions of hard stones and granite, 80 % of the beacons or spar buoys in the World are in Finland and Sweden. There are two official languages, Finnish and Swedish. In the self-governing Åland archipelago and along the coastline Swedish speakers constitute a majority.</p> <p>Time zone UTC +2, summer nights are very short further north in the Gulf of Bothnia. The Finnish Sailing and Boating Federation (origins 1906 and 1937, merged in 2011) have 330 clubs with 60,000 members.</p> <p>Around 13,000 motorboats and 11,000 sailing boats are registered within clubs. The right to use the yachting club ensign is given to boats registered in the club and which are annually safety inspected.</p> <p>There are altogether about 800,000 boats and vessels, including small rowboats.</p>
Currency with link for exchange rates	<p>Since 2002 the Finnish currency is Euro. You can pay with credit card almost everywhere with the exception of small shops in the archipelago. We recommend you to have a small amount of cash available to rent a sauna or buy fresh fish etc.</p>
Formalities, Customs, passport control, visa	<p>A yacht coming directly from another Schengen country need not report to the passport control point nor is it required to sail within the official channels. All crew members must carry their passport or national ID card. Crew list signed by the captain required if transiting the Saimaa Canal.</p> <p>Not necessary to clear customs unless you are carrying more than the allowed amounts of tobacco / alcohol, normally allowed in Europe when entering by car.</p> <p>Foreign yachts arriving in Finland from a non-Schengen Area country must keep to the official Customs routes, and report to the nearest coastguard station or Port of Entry along the channel. Passport control station should be alerted by VHF Channels 68 or 16 or by telephone, approximately one hour before arrival.</p> <p>When sailing between Finland and non-Schengen country (i.e. Russia), a yacht always has to go to the passport control point and to file a Customs declaration.</p> <p>A clearance declaration is issued on completion of formalities and this must be shown to the authorities at the port of departure.</p> <p>Visas required for visitors from and to Russia (also Kaliningrad).</p> <p>Finnish Customs: phone +358 9 6141, telefax +358 20 492 2852, www.tulli.fi</p> <p>The Finnish Border Guard: phone +358 71 872 0000, www.raja.fi</p>
Banned Substances	<p>Finnish Customs www.tulli.fi Intelligence and Investigation Report 2010</p> <p>In all cases visitors should advise Customs of what they have on board (mostly referring to medicines).</p>
Boat's documents required	<p>For EU boats, proof of VAT status (since 1.1.1987) is required also Ships Radio Licence. One member of the crew must have a radio operator's certificate of competence.</p>
Insurance	<p>Insurance is not compulsory.</p>
Legislation certificate of competence	<p>Boats with an engine of 15 kW (over 20 hp) or a sailing boat exceeding 5.5 m, must be registered. Registered boats require that the captain is at least 15 years old but he/she needs no certificate of competence. For vessels over 24 m ICC (professional navigation certificate) is required. For visiting vessels flag state rules apply.</p>
Alcohol limits – on the water and on the road	<p>The alcohol limit at sea for leisure boats is 1.0/ml. Coast Guard and Police officers do random breath alcohol test. If you cause an accident, even with less than 1.0/ml, you can be charged and you risk paying a penalty. Requirements also apply to foreign vessels.</p> <p>For commercial vessels the limit is 0.5/ml. On the road the limit is 0.5/ml, for all drivers.</p>
Legislation re life jackets	<p>Life jackets in right size must be available for every person on board. No legislation on wearing jackets, but a recommendation for the skipper to decide.</p>

TSS, esp. new ones	Mandatory ship reporting system (roughly aligned on SW - NE direction) in the international waters of Gulf of Finland (GOFREP) took effect on Jan 2011 in addition to territorial VTS systems. TSS established Norra Kvarken in 2013.
Military exercise areas	Military protected areas are marked with signs on shore as well as on ordinary sea charts.
Major construction sites	None at this moment. Probably the next new pipeline, Nord Stream 2 from St. Petersburg to Greifswald may, at a later date, be operated in the Gulf of Finland.
Windfarms/wave and tidal energy projects	Today, only a few off shore turbines on the Gulf of Bothnia coast line. Some smaller wind farms on shore. Wave and tidal energy projects not relevant so far.
Bridges	Finland has mostly fixed bridges. They are found on the lakes and on inland waterways. Some fixed bridges can be found in the archipelago. Vertical clearance for fixed bridges is shown on the charts. Opening times for opening bridges vary and must be checked individually. In the archipelago cable ferries are still in operation.
Fishing equipment	For marking of fishing gear please see https://www.ahven.net/v2_tiedostot/375.pdf
Habitats and other protected areas	Nature protected sea areas and islands are marked on the sea chart. On islands or shores also noticeboards inform of prohibited periods, e.g. during nesting times.
Flag traditions/ application of flag rules	The yacht club flags (around 330) are equal to the Finnish flag and raised at 0800 and lowered at sunset, or latest at 2100. As a special custom in Finland, the flag is flown at Midsummer from 1800 on Midsummer Eve until 2100 on Midsummer's Day. When sailing in Finnish waters visitors are expected to fly a courtesy flag under starboard spreader. On a motorboat it should be on a pole.
Weather forecast	There is a lot of free weather Apps available from the Finnish Meteorological Institute. www.ilmatieteenlaitos.fi . Turku Radio broadcasts weather information on VHF.
Harbours including approx number of natural harbours	Classified guest harbours total about 1,300; 500 coastal marinas and nearly 800 fresh water marinas, mostly on Lake Saimaa. Harbours are classified according to their service levels, about 100 harbours offering all services. Additionally, there are very many nature harbours. For guest harbours see www.vierassatamat.fi and www.visitsaaristo.net
Mooring booking facilities	One can book harbours at http://www.satamapaikka.com/en/ . Here you can find more than 20 moorings in Finland and 2 in Estonia. http://dockspot.com gives 4 moorings and many single harbours have own reservations, like newly opened, ex. military island Örö http://visitoro.fi Please notice that our internet connection works exceptionally well also at sea. Hence one can book these moorings even there.
Swinging mooring buoys for pleasure yachts	Some local clubs have their own harbours for members only. All buoys are to be used by members only. The national Merikarhut / Sjöbjörnarna (Sea Bears) have green buoys in their own private harbours where the same rules apply.
Anchoring and free access ashore	The Finnish "Everyman's right" allows free right of access to the land and waterways, freedom to explore and enjoy nature. Boats may anchor temporarily without special permission. The basic rules are: do not disturb or destroy. Information is available in Swedish, English, German and Russian. In a natural harbour, do not go close to other anchored boats, if there is room further away. You can stay in the same place for a day or two without asking the landowner's permission. Some places are seal or bird preservation areas and going ashore is prohibited during some periods. Preservation areas are marked on the sea charts. Because of the quite challenging waters, we recommend to use the guest harbours.
Good harbour manners	In Finnish harbours it is usually quiet after 2200. As a guest you can use any available mooring/berth in the harbour. Very often red/green signs are used and you may find a green sign with a notice of the return date of the owner.
Safety in harbours	In a guest harbour boats should be placed in a way that the spreading of a fire is hindered and the removal of boats is easy in case of fire. The boats have to be placed so that they can be reached by the harbour's fire extinguishers. Everyone on board should act carefully and avoid fires. Boats used for overnight accommodation should have smoke alarms and fire extinguishers installed. Finnish boaters may want to keep to themselves and therefore moor away from other boats.
Rescue Services	Maritime Rescue Centre +358 294 1000 or VHF Ch: 16 / VHF-DSC 70 and 112 Emergency Response Centre Administration www.112.fi

Pyrotechnics - legislation re carrying - if flareguns (Very pistols) permitted - if so is licence required? - procedure for disposal	Pyrotechnics in recreational boats are not required by law so no requirement for foreign-flagged visiting boats. However Finnish boats are strongly recommended to have an annual inspection which does require signal rockets, flares and torches to be on board. To be able to keep a Finnish boat in a boat club harbour (and ashore) this inspection is required - it is therefore necessary to carry flares. Rockets can be replaced by flare pistols, but then a licence is required. Since 2015 bright LEDs or other electronic lights can be part of the safety kit. Maritime shops take old flares for disposal when buying new ones.
Staying during the winter	Some marinas in Turku, Helsinki and Kotka provide winter storage. Good value winter storage can be found in Lappeenranta in Lake Saimaa. Along the coastline smaller storages may be found.
Antifouling regulations	In accordance with EU biocide directive.
Fuel availability	In marine fuel stations 95/98 petrol and diesel is available. Biodiesel includes 6% additives. Both marine and road diesel contain 6% biodiesel. Coloured diesel with reduced tax, is sold in just a few stations and may be used only for commercial vessels (be alert).
Gas and electricity systems available – necessity for adapters	Bottled gas in the most common systems used in EU are not commonly available. However, Camping Gaz and Primus bottles are stocked at least at HSK and NJK (Blekholmen location) yacht clubs in Helsinki.
Repair and maintenance facilities	For engine maintenance and repairs please view the manufacturers' websites. For hull and rig repairs contact the Harbour Master.
Pump out stations for sewage and oily water	All yachts, including foreign flagged visiting yachts, are forbidden to discharge sewage within Finnish territorial waters (limit of 12NM from the shore). All Finnish flagged yachts are required to be fitted with a toilet holding tank capable of being emptied via a deck fitting at a pump-out station. Network of pump-out stations is extensive compared to other European countries. The service is free of charge. Grey water tanks are not required.
Pump out stations – type(s) of nozzle used in the country	1 1/2" - ISO-standard 4567 and 7162
Public transport	In the larger cities there are public transportation systems; Helsinki also has trams and a subway. Tourist tickets for one or several days are available, but should be bought in advance.
Major source of charts/pilot books in the country with link	Good assortment of nautical charts and harbour books can be found at the ProSailor shop at Helsinki, Lauttasaari (Drumsö), Veneentekijäntie 14, very close to HSK sailing club. www.marinekauppa.com and www.merikartat.fi and +358 10 5485605. Also Karttakeskus Oy have nautical charts, but only Finnish and only in their webshop. www.karttakeskus.fi
Shopping hours	The opening hours vary depending on where you are. In the larger cities most shops are open until 2100, in the archipelago it varies from island to island. Walpurgis Night or Vappu (in Finnish) on 1 May and on Midsummer Day shops and services are closed.
Important phone numbers, home pages and useful links	Customs: phone +358 9 6141, telefax +358 20 492 2852, www.tulli.fi Border Guard: phone +358 71 872 0000, www.raja.fi , www.visitfinland.com and http://wikitravel.org/en/Finland .
Tick borne diseases	Ticks carry two significant diseases, Lyme disease (Borrelia) and tick-borne encephalitis (TBE virus). Borrelia can be treated with antibiotic and against TBE there is vaccine. TBE-infection is most common in Åland but you can also get this disease in minor regions of southern Finland. In contrast to TBE, Borrelia occurs along the entire Finnish coast line.
Legislation re visiting with pets aboard	Pets must have passports issued by an EU-certified veterinary doctor. The passport lists the name of the animal's owner, the microchip data and what vaccinations have been given and when. Rabies vaccine is mandatory for all dogs older than 12 weeks and has to be administered 21 days before the journey at the latest and the vaccination has to be in force for the whole duration of the journey. Dogs are required to be treated for equinocosis 24-120 hours before arriving in Finland. This medication is not required for cats.

Practical advice and miscellaneous information	Check the weather report daily and remember to keep in touch with your relatives and inform them where you are going. You can easily find shelter in the archipelago and along the coast lines. Carry a small amount of cash in local currency. For fishing permits please view: http://www.eraluvat.fi/en/fishing.html
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This document does not claim to include all known information on the subjects covered but the compilers and the Baltic Sea Cruising Network (BSCN) believe that the information contained represents a useful aid to those visiting the country by boat. Visitors should make prudent use of the information available on the websites quoted. No responsibility for loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from action as a result of the material in this publication is accepted by the compilers or the Baltic Sea Cruising Network.

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