



Ruka - Tailor Made



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group

VISITING: Finland

BROCHURE CODE: 5976

DURATION: 7 nights

In Brief

Ruka has an immense assortment of activities, making it a perfect base for tailoring your holiday to suit you. Over the course of a week, you can choose from snowmobiling, dog sledding, relaxing in a sauna and even spending the night in an igloo.

Our Opinion

“ Ruka is a fantastic spot for a tailor-made trip as it offers such a diverse range of activities to choose from. The beautiful Vanha Karhu Apartments are merely minutes away from the starting points for all of the activities, so getting around is really simple. On top of all of this, you can enjoy Ruka’s breathtaking natural landscape and snow-covered surroundings. ”

Amy Hope

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Minimum of 2 people; maximum of 50 (on some activities)

Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

Minimum and maximum age

If a specific minimum age applies to this holiday, it can be found in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page.

Unless otherwise stated in the in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page, the minimum age for participation in an Artisan holiday is typically 8 years old (there may be younger children in some destinations who have booked with other companies). If an adult-only environment is important to you, then please contact our Travel Experts and they will advise on the best dates and destinations for you. If you are looking for a holiday designed specifically for families then please see our sister company www.activitiesabroad.com

Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

Guides & Safety

When partaking in any activity, it is imperative that everyone in your group listens very closely to the instructions provided by the guide and that they are abided by at all times. Our guides are experts in their field and no one knows the environment better than these highly knowledgeable and experienced providers.

Prior to starting any activity, please make it clear to your guide if there is any element of the safety briefing you are unsure of or would like to clarify before you set off.

Our guides will always take local conditions into account when considering whether an activity can go ahead. This is, in part, why your itinerary is subject to change at short notice. This rarely happens, however, if it does, we will always endeavour to reschedule the activity for later in your holiday. If this is not possible then the cost of the activity will be refunded to you when you return home.

Our guides' word on activities is always final and your safety is their principal concern at all times; please respect their decisions. By following their instructions, your safety and enjoyment during each activity will be greatly enhanced.

NB: In order to participate in our holidays, all guests must be able to understand instructions given in English. These instructions may be delivered verbally or in writing and will include vital safety information and ongoing instruction during activities.

Pregnancy

If you are pregnant at the time of booking your holiday or you discover you are pregnant prior to your departure, firstly – congratulations! Secondly – please tell us as soon as possible. This situation does frequently arise and we are able to advise you both from our own first-hand experience and from discussing this at length with our expert local partners who have experience in this area. The more notice you can give us the better, in order to suggest any adaptations to the itinerary you have booked which will reduce the risk to both mother and baby. Please contact our customer service team for more information. <https://www.artisantravel.co.uk/about-us/contact-us>

Experience and Fitness

Most of the activities we offer have been designed for beginners who have no prior experience and are of all age ranges and fitness levels. Our guides provide expert advice, tuition and instructions prior to any activity going ahead. Activities are designed to be enjoyed and not endured, but some, such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, do require a more basic level of fitness than, for example, riding on a snowmobile. If you have any questions, then please contact one of our Travel Experts who can provide first-hand advice.

The only holidays which are not as suitable for complete beginners are the multi-night safaris which involve several days in wilderness cabins travelling by either snowmobile or husky safari. Again, this all depends on the individual taking part, but some prior experience and understanding of these types of activities can be very helpful.

Financial Protection

We know that your holiday will be one of the most important investments you make in a year and we understand how important it is for you to know that you are financially protected and that your money is secure. Alongside our ATOL financial protection (ATOL 6865) you may book with confidence as we are a fully bonded member of ABTA (ABTA number Y6261). This means that you have the benefit of

ABTA's code of conduct and your money is fully protected regardless of whether we are arranging your flights for you or not. We also offer our clients our 'Peace of Mind Promise' to really put your mind at ease. Please see the following link for full details: <https://www.artisantravel.co.uk/about-us/financial-protection>

Responsible Travel

Responsible Travel is at the heart of our business and our approach is based on ensuring that our holidays are environmentally, socially and economically responsible. We work in some of the most pristine environments in the world and with suppliers who we class as friends; protecting and providing for both is central to our ethos. Full details of our Responsible Travel Policy can be found on our [website](#).

Tipping

At your discretion, you may wish to tip your guides at the end of your stay as a gesture of appreciation for their efforts during your holiday.

Medical History and Advice

We want our holidays to be accessible as they can be and will do our best to accommodate any special requests and requirements where possible. We have a wide range of holidays and destinations and so our travel experts will help find the best holiday for you.

In order to give us the best possible chance to do this we ask that if you or any member of your party has any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday or has any special requirements, that you tell us at the time of enquiry or booking. You must also promptly advise us if any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday develops after your booking has been confirmed. You may need to provide a doctor's note and proof of insurance in some cases as the health and safety of our clients is absolutely paramount.

In providing this information you are allowing us to work with our expert local partners to ensure that your whole party can enjoy the holiday. By letting us know in advance we can discreetly work with you to adapt any part of the holiday which may potentially be challenging. Being able to prepare for this in advance makes an incredible difference to what we can offer and minimises any impact on your party and the rest of the group.

Unfortunately, if you choose not to share this information with us in advance then it may limit some or all of the itinerary you have booked, and we cannot be held accountable for any additional costs or missed activities resulting from this.

Insurance

Insurance is not included in your holiday, but it is a pre-requisite to travelling with us. You will need to ensure that you have cover for all the activities that you will be participating in during your holiday.

It is extremely important that you take out a suitable travel insurance policy at the time of booking. Plans do sometimes change, and you will need this policy should you need to cancel your holiday.

If you are struggling to find a suitable policy then details of our preferred provider, who will cover you for all the activities we offer, can be found on our website by [clicking here](#). Please note that this policy is available to EU residents under the age of 75 only.

The UK Foreign Office Advice

Our clients' safety is at the centre of everything we do, and our operations team continually assesses and monitors the destinations we feature. We carry out thorough risk assessments and work closely with all of our suppliers to continually follow best practice. For up to date travel advice the UK government offers its [Travel Aware website](#) as well as the advice detailed below.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice

We receive all updates from the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#) with regards to travel advice and we always ensure that we follow this advice in our operations. The FCO issues travel advisories for countries based on a very wide range of factors. They may provide notification about things as simple as a football match and crowds, or they may go so far as to advise against all travel to a region. We ask all our clients to refer to the relevant [Travel Advice by Country](#) for the destinations they are visiting in order to make an informed decision on the safety of the destination based on the details provided. It also provides vital information regarding entry requirements, embassy information, local laws and customs as well as specific safety and health. Guests should take responsibility for keeping themselves up to date with this advice. Please also ensure that, if you are transiting through another country, you have read the advice and meet the entry requirements for that destination too.

The FCO travel advice is applicable to British Passport Holders. Most governments will issue their own travel advice for a region and, if you are not a UK resident then you can find some helpful links below:

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade <http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/>

Canadian Consular Affairs Bureau <http://voyage.gc.ca/>

The U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs <http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/english.html>

If the FCO deems that there is an unacceptable level of risk for UK citizens then, together with the government, they may issue an advisory against all travel to a region or country. If such an advisory is published, then we will act accordingly, and this may require the cancellation, curtailment or amendment of a holiday itinerary. These decisions are made on the basis of ensuring our clients' safety and will affect all clients on the holiday, regardless of their nationality.

If one of our local experts suggests an amendment due to a situation which develops locally then we may also take the decision to amend an itinerary appropriately.

If we have to cancel your holiday prior to departure you will be offered the option of an alternative trip (where any price difference will either be refunded to or covered by you) or a full refund of the monies paid.

If we have to curtail a holiday, then you will be refunded for any costs for the elements we have been unable to deliver, where we have been able to secure a refund from our suppliers. If we must reroute a holiday, then any basis for refund is determined on a case by case basis and dependent on whether the central holiday experience was provided or not.

Booking activities locally

Additional activities can be booked locally in almost all our destinations. However, as per our booking conditions, we cannot be held responsible for any injury or loss incurred through participation in activities which are booked at your destination outside of our holiday itinerary (see our 'Terms and Conditions' for further details).

When arranging any such activity please always ensure that safety is your primary concern.

In some of our destinations, you can borrow or hire equipment for use in your free time. You do so entirely at your own risk. You must ensure that you are properly prepared, have the necessary equipment and knowledge (maps, etc) and ensure that where applicable, you follow marked routes. We recommend discussing your plans with the local teams who will be able to advise on the most suitable options for you.

Always let the reception/guide know where you are planning to go and take a torch and mobile phone (with the hotel/guide's phone number stored). It is also a good idea to leave your contact number and the time you expect to return to the hotel should the hotel need to contact you.

Brexit information for British Passport holders

For the most up to date information on how the UK's departure from the EU may affect your holiday please [click here](#) to view our Brexit information for British Passport holders.

Snowmobile Safety

If your holiday includes snowmobiling or the chance for you to add on this activity, then please read this important information.

Driving a snowmobile should be considered the same as driving a hire car. The owner of the vehicle will have third-party motor liability cover in place which complies with the local legislation and extends to include hire and reward. If you (as the hirer of the snowmobile during any safari) injure someone or damage someone else's property (including another snowmobile), then the owner's third-party liability cover will cover such risks.

Any damage to the snowmobile you are riding will also be covered under the owner's motor insurance policy; however, you as the driver will have to cover the policy excess. In most cases, this will be somewhere between £500 - £1,500 (the equivalent in local currency) but it can vary.

To our knowledge (and we have searched extensively) there is no insurance policy that will cover you for this excess and it cannot be waived. In some cases, it may be possible to pay to lower this, but this is rare and always arranged locally. Ask the guides if you have any queries regarding the excess, etc.

Snowmobile accidents are rare, but the driver should take extra care throughout. You will, of course, be provided with a full briefing on how to use a snowmobile. However, if you are unsure of any instructions or any aspect of operating a snowmobile, then you must ask a guide for clarification immediately.

Whether you are driving or riding as a passenger, you must ensure that your travel insurance provides full cover for snowmobiling. This includes medical costs in the event you sustain an injury requiring medical treatment overseas. If you are a UK resident travelling in the EU, you should also ensure that you carry your EHIC card (European Health Insurance Card).

Drivers of snowmobiles should be in possession of a full driving licence. The minimum age for driving a snowmobile varies, but for insurance purposes, you generally need to be 18 years old to drive a snowmobile. You must ensure that anyone who may be required to drive a snowmobile takes a valid driving licence on holiday (either the old paper licence or the new photo card licence). This is not necessarily to show your instructors or guides, but for spot checks by police which occur regularly. There are strict rules governing snowmobiles and alcohol consumption and therefore alcohol should not be consumed at all before participating in a safari.

If you are unable to drive a snowmobile, then you may not be able to take part in a safari, however, you may be offered the chance to travel as a pillion passenger on another machine if you agree to do so. If this option is not available, then in some cases the guide may be able to arrange for a sled to be pulled for you behind their own machine.

Those under the age of 16 will normally travel in a sled pulled by the guide's snowmobile. If sleds are unavailable, as is the case with some safaris, older children may be able to ride as pillion passengers. Discretion may be applied in resort by our expert guides based on the individual child. Please note for Canada and the US different rules and regulations may apply.

Finland FAQs

How dark will it be in Finland?

Few places on the planet experience daylight fluctuations like Finland.

In the winter months, the sun will disappear below the horizon for weeks (mid to late December) and the whole landscape will be bathed in the mystical 'blue light' the locals call Kaamos. In general, your activities will take place within this blue light but in December and January, the hours are restricted so you should be prepared for activities to take place in darker conditions.

The darker months do have one distinct advantage and that is that you need dark skies for the Northern Lights to be visible. In the darker months, you don't necessarily have to stay up as late to have a chance to see them.

The daylight hours do start to rapidly increase as the season progresses and in January they increase to around four hours of daylight, increasing by four hours a month.

The dark nights return in September. This is the start of the Aurora season with around 12 hours of daylight and stunning colours across the country as the autumn colours bathe the forests in orange and red. The real contraction of daylight hours begins through October and November as winter returns.

Each season has its own charm and beauty in this region and the daylight variation is an important contributing factor.

What is the currency in Finland?

Finland is part of the Euro Zone. Major credit cards are widely accepted and are the simplest way to pay. For some items such as local handicrafts, you may need cash and so you may like to consider taking some Euros with you as cashpoints are not widely available.

How expensive is Finland?

As with most Scandinavian countries, Finland is not the cheapest destination when it comes to purchases. Alcohol in particular is not cheap and you should expect to pay London prices for drinks as a minimum.

We try and keep things nice and simple for you and in the majority of cases, you will find that all breakfasts and most evening meals are included in your stay. In remote destinations, we will also include lunches.

We do not provide any holidays on an all inclusive basis, so drinks are payable directly to the hotel. Major credit cards are accepted widely at accommodation.

You may want some cash for souvenirs of your holiday which you will be able to purchase in most destinations. Cashpoints are not readily available and you will need to take some Euros with you.

What kind of plugs do I need in Finland?

Finland uses the Northern European two-pronged plug (type C), so you will need an adaptor if travelling from the UK.

Do I need a visa to travel to Finland?

For those travelling from within the EU no visa is required. For UK nationals, you are able to stay for up to three months without a visa and your passport must be valid for the duration of your stay. For anyone travelling on a non British passport it is your responsibility to ensure that you have all necessary visas, passport validity and documents in place before you travel. Please contact your foreign office or the Finnish Embassy for details.

What should I wear in a Finnish sauna?

The Finns are obsessed with saunas and you will typically find them in most accommodation, even wilderness cabins.

There are smoke saunas, electric saunas, wood-heated saunas and steam saunas and one question we always get asked is what to wear when you go to visit the sauna. In the majority of cases the answer is that the Finns will be wearing nothing (not even a towel) and that is why there are male and female saunas in most hotels and lodges. Going in 'au naturelle' is seen to be the most hygienic way and sauna towels are always available to sit on. We are well aware that this fills many people with dread and there is no obligation to wear anything other than what you are comfortable with wearing (swimwear or towels are still options). You need to be aware that many people will be embracing the natural look.

No matter what you wear, the customary roll in the snow or dip in the lake are rather invigorating (as long as you are medically fit and free from heart trouble - as it is bracing!).

How cold will it be in Finland?

The answer to this question is entirely dependent on the time of year you are travelling and where you are travelling to as in Helsinki the weather is a lot milder than in Lapland. As the majority of our Finnish holidays are based above the Arctic Circle, the information below is based on the average conditions in the Lappish town of Kittila.

If you travel in the autumn months of September and October, typical temperatures will range between 10 degrees and freezing. This is a very variable time of year and the snow has been known to start to fall in September. Anyone travelling within this period should be prepared to be flexible with any activities, as hikes can easily become snowshoe treks in October in Finland.

The months between November and February are the real winter months in Finnish Lapland when daytime temperatures will average between -5 and -15. You must be aware that these are averages and the extremes can range from 3 degrees to -40 in the winter storms. These extremes are rare and beyond our control. The guides will always adapt itineraries for safety reasons especially if they are in anyway concerned that the conditions are not suitable.

Night time temperatures are always significantly lower and can drop to an average of -21 in January. Wrapped in your cosy winter clothing, you will be well equipped for the conditions day or night.

Useful words and phrases in Finnish

We always encourage our clients to respect the lives of local inhabitants by learning a few important words, hello, goodbye, please, thank you etc.

English	Finnish
Yes	Kyllä
No	Ei

Please	Ole hyvä
Thank you (very much)	Kiitos
Good Morning	Hyvää huomenta
Good Afternoon	Hyvää päivää
Good night	Hyvää yötä
Goodbye	Näkemiin
How are you?	Mitä teille kuuluu?
Fine thanks and you?	Hyvää, kiitos. entä teille?
Do you speak English?	Puhutteko englantia?

What is the food like in Finland?

In our opinion Finnish food has always exceeded customer expectations. In Lapland, the abundance of lakes and the traditional reindeer herders mean that there is an emphasis on local produce and fish and reindeer will appear on most menus.

The locals in Lapland can all be seen in the autumn months collecting berries to store for the winter months and if you are lucky enough, some of our local suppliers will serve these in their restaurants. The wonderful bright orange cloudberry is something that everyone must try and lingonberries provide the ideal accompaniment to reindeer and are often used to make juice.

Fish such as the Inari White Fish are unique to the waters of some of the Finnish lakes and the local people fish on a regular basis both during the summer and winter months (ice fishing is one of the most popular winter pastimes).

Although we understand that some people may not want to eat reindeer, it is a wonderful meat. The herders work using the same methods that they have done for centuries and there can be few meats that are as lean, delicious and sustainably farmed. Whether it is reindeer stew, filet steak, sautéed with mashed potato or salami, it is well worth trying if you are a carnivore.

In some of our destinations the restaurants have a reputation for cuisine. In others the food is fabulously simple home cooking using local ingredients. In remote areas, the access to fresh fruit and vegetables can be limited and so they may not form a major part of the menu. In all of destinations, we find that the food is exactly what you need after a day of experiences - whether it is a set menu of crafted cuisine or a meal cooked on an open fire in a wilderness cabin.

Please let us know of any dietary requirements at the time of booking so our suppliers can accommodate them to the best of their ability.

Helsinki is a wonderfully gastronomic city, so if you are stopping off on your way North or South then we will be more than happy to recommend some restaurants, because there are some fabulous culinary experiences to be had.

Flight schedule changes and connecting transportation

On your documentation, we will confirm your flight schedule. Sometimes the flight number, routing and timings might change prior to your departure. If the change is classed as a significant change then we will contact you to discuss this. Please see our booking conditions for details.

Flight schedule changes can impact on your pre and post-holiday travel arrangements if these have been booked separately to your holiday. We strongly recommend that you do not book transport (such as trains or transfers), car parking or non-connecting flights to the departure point for your holiday until you have received your final confirmed travel times when your final travel documents are issued. We are not responsible for the effect of any schedule change on your pre or post travel arrangements. We strongly recommend that you do not purchase non-flexible or non-refundable tickets to avoid cancellation and penalty charges.

Booking your own flights - cancellation disclaimer

If you have chosen to book your own flights, then you will need to wait until we confirm to you that the holiday departure has met the minimum numbers required to run (if applicable to your chosen holiday). Once the holiday is guaranteed to run, you will be informed and you can then make your arrangements.

If transfers are included in your holiday, please ensure that any potential flights will be met by our standard transfers (speak to one of our Travel Experts for advice) otherwise private transfer supplements may be applicable. Once your flights are booked, please send us a copy of your detailed flight itinerary.

Please be aware that most tickets are non-refundable in the case of cancellation. For this reason, we strongly advise you check the rules of the ticket and check the limitations of your cancellation insurance before booking. We cannot be held liable, in the unlikely eventuality that we should be forced to cancel or amend your trip, for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made.

Special requests & in-flight meals

Due to the remote locations of our holidays, flight availability can be exceptionally limited. To ensure that you can travel on the seats that we have pre-allocated to a certain holiday, flight options might be restricted. Please discuss this with our Travel Sales Experts at the time of booking.

Generally, we are unable to assign specific seating on flights although we can make requests on your behalf. We cannot guarantee this and if a request is unable to be actioned then this is not classed as a breach of contract on our part.

If your booking allows for online check-in then you should do so as early as possible to ensure you are allocated seats next to your travelling companions. Details regarding this will be provided in your final travel documents which will be provided approximately one week prior to travel.

If you require special seats or assistance at the airport due to a medical condition, reduced mobility or disability, then please let us know at the time of booking (or as soon as possible prior to travel if the issue occurs after booking). You may be required to provide written confirmation of your fitness to travel from a doctor.

Domestic flights and those within Europe, may not provide meals or snacks onboard so it is always worth remembering this if you are due to land late in the evening when opportunities to buy food may be limited.

We always forward any dietary requirements to the airlines, but we cannot guarantee the availability of the chosen diet onboard. You may want to consider bringing your own food to guarantee there will be something you will be able to eat. This is the approach our staff with dietary requirements take when flying within Europe.

Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.artisantravel.co.uk/booking-conditions>