

A photograph of two young Sámi children in a vast, open landscape. One child is sitting on the shoulders of the other, both looking off to the side. The landscape is flat and green, stretching to a distant horizon under a soft sky.

SÁMI CULTURE TOUR in OULU 2026

9.-13.2.2026

Oulu is European Capital of Culture 2026. In Oulu, life is an adventure, filled with rich tones of creativity and the magic of pure northern nature. We welcome everyone like an old friend, so please come and enjoy the laid-back, creative atmosphere of our beautiful seaside city.

Culture, art, beautiful winter nature and activities, pure tastes of the North – you will experience all this and especially the beauty of Sámi culture during the city break in Oulu.

Day 1

Arrival flight to Oulu. Bus transfer to Oulu city center and check in and to overnight at **Lapland Hotels Oulu**. Hotel is located in the center of Oulu, next to the majestic cathedral and the lush Ainola Park. The stylishly decorated rooms reflect the stories of Lapland and the tranquility of the north.

Dinner and overnight at Lapland Hotels Oulu.

Day 2

A hearty breakfast at the hotel.

Meet the local guide for a **city walking tour** (about 3 hours).

The guide will tell you about the persons and events of the past, show you where the long narrow boats full of tar barrels landed and lead you to the old storehouses and to the market hall guarded by the statue of a policeman. You will reveal the humorous stories behind this figure loved by everyone. During the walk we visit the two **main exhibitions of the year 2026**;

Fotografiska Tallinn brings a photo exhibition to Finland for the first time.

Entitled PLAY, the group exhibition is part of the European Capital of Culture program.

The brand new exhibition is inspired by the theme of Cultural Climate Change, which invites us to see beyond the ordinary, to connect in deeper ways, and to envision a future where creativity and community are at the forefront.

Through a multidisciplinary lens of 16 international artists, the exhibition explores play as both a source of joy and a distraction, highlighting moments of delight, resilience, rebellion and connection. Together, the works form a visual journey into play as a deeply human form of expression and a non-verbal language.

Layers in The Peace Machine is an immersive and multidisciplinary media-installation, entangling technology and art. Based on the literary work "Peace Machine" by late Timo Honkela, the installation portrays peace as a dynamic process, that shifts and evolves with the interaction from the participants.

Layers in The Peace Machine encourages the participant to reflect on their own relationship with peace and peace-related questions. What sort of memories, images and emotions arise? How to work towards a more peaceful world in everyday life?

Optional activities:

In the afternoon some free time for independent visits to the several exhibitions Oulu2026 or/and for shopping. There is also possibility for some winter activities in Nallikari. Nallikari's location near by the city center but in the middle of nature and right by the seaside makes many different activities possible through the year.

We recommend arranging the private coach or minivan transfers to Nallikari and the activities for a group beforehand. Also, Aurora hunting tours in the evenings are available.

Dinner at Oula Kitchen & Bar at the Hotel.

A restaurant that honors northern experiences and evokes the essence of Lapland is the heart of our hotel. The Sámi word "oula" means floodwaters— a name that also inspires the city of Oulu, known for its ever-flowing river. The dishes crafted by Oula's chefs bring the nature of Lapland to your plate in a delicate and expressive manner.

Overnight.

Day 3

A hearty breakfast at the hotel.

Transfer to **Oulu Art Museum**.

Eanangiella - Voice of the Land.

A major exhibition of Sámi art and duodji explores the diversity, resilience and sustainability of Sámi culture. On 13-14, there is a guided exhibition tour (about 1 hour).

Day 3

Transfer to Oulu Theatre.

17.30 buffet dinner at Theater Restaurant Aulis / OVLLÁ BUFFET MENU

19.00 Ovvllá Opera

An opera about seeking roots and state-led oppression of the Sámi people. Ovvllá is an opera about the disappearance of truth and about profound loneliness. It tells the story of having one's roots and cultural heritage torn apart. When a child is separated from their parents and forced into a boarding school, they encounter an unfamiliar language and culture.

In January 2026, the world premiere of Ovvllá opera will bring to the main stage of Oulu Theatre Sámi singers who are well-known within the Sámi community but rarely seen on Finnish stages.

The lead roles in Ovvllá have been cast; Emil Kárlsen will play Ovvllá, and Ànne Máddji Heatta will portray Ánná. The opera features seven soloist roles, five of which are written for Sámi singers. The casting was done internationally, and we're especially delighted to showcase artists who are celebrated in the Sámi community but seldom seen in Finnish theatre. Ovvllá is composed by Cecilia Damström in close collaboration with Sámi musician Emil Kárlsen, who compose the joiks.

Intermission coffee / tea and the special Óvlla pastry/cake.

22.00 (about) transfer back to the hotel, free evening and overnight.

Day 4

In the afternoon about 30 minutes coach transfer to Koiteli.

Winter day in Koiteli (about 3 hours + transfers 30 min/ow)

Welcome to Koiteli located by river Kiiminkijoki to spend a wonderful winter day in a good company! Word Koiteli comes from Sami language and means "in the middle".

You get to enjoy fun snow activities on an island located in the middle of two rapids.

Beautiful surroundings, ancient trees and the silence surrounding you will give you the feeling of being also in the center of yourself.

Snow activities include short try outs of different kinds of snowshoes, traditional kick sledge 'potkuri' and sledge 'pulkka'.

In Tunnelmatupa hut everyone will have the chance to make their own souvenir out of wood, leather and pine wood tar.

Small snack with warm juice/coffee/tea served non-stop during the whole program.

During the day have delicious lunch soup: Salmon or mushroom or vegetable soup, bread, water and juice. Transfer (30 min) back to the city center.

Transfer (30 min) back to the city center. Some free time in Oulu. Overnight.

Day 5

Breakfast at the hotel restaurant.

12.00 Check out and 12.30 coach transfer to Oulu Airport for the return flight home.

Group size 15-20 pax

Price starting at

1000 € / person, minimum 20 pax

1035 € / person, minimum 15 pax

Price includes

- Pohjolan Matka's private coach and drive for 5 days as per suggested program
- hotel accommodation in twin/dbl rooms for 4 nights
- buffet breakfast x 4
- half board: lunch x 1, dinner x 3
- entrance fees to the mentioned exhibitions
- opera ticket
- intermission coffee / tea with the special pastry/cake
- winter day in Koiteli with all the activities mentioned in the program, services of English-speaking guides, small snack with warm juice/coffee/tea served non-stop during the whole program
- local English-speaking guides for the city walking tour and the Art Museum
- driver's accommodation

Not included

- flight tickets
- single supplement **300 € / pax / 3 nights**
- drinks
- other outdoor activities or other excursions
- winter gear in Koiteli (overall, gloves, hat, woolen socks and winter boots) **25 € / pax**. Size info needed in advance.
- travel insurance

Reservations

The services are on request, and the final rates will be checked when reservations are made.

The program is preliminary. We reserve the right to make alterations to the program and/or to the itinerary.