Key sights

**SUOMENLINNA CHURCH**
The church on Suomenlinna was built to serve as a Russian Orthodox garrison church. In the 1920s, during the early days of Finnish independence, it was converted into a Lutheran place of worship. A lighthouse, serving both air and sea traffic, continues to operate in the steeple to this day.

**GREAT COURTYARD**
Designed by the fortress’s founder Augustin Ehrensvärd, the Great Courtyard was completed in the 1760s and served as the main square. It was badly damaged in the Crimean war in 1855. The tomb of August Ehrensvärd can be found in the square.

**DRY DOCK**
Suomenlinna’s dry dock is one of the oldest operational dry docks in the world. In the 1760s, ships for the Swedish coastal fleet were built here, under the supervision of naval architect F. H. af Chapman. These days, the dry dock is used for renovating old wooden ships.

**KUSTAANMIEKKA**
Kustaanmieka offers a view of the original bastion fortress as well as the late 19th century Russian defence line, complete with sand banks and artillery emplacements.

**KING’S GATE**
The monumental King’s Gate is the iconic symbol of Suomenlinna. It was built between 1753 and 1754 as a ceremonial gateway to the fortress. The gate is built on the site where a ship carrying the fortress’s founder, King Adolf Frederick of Sweden, was anchored while he inspected the construction of the fortress in 1752.
Welcome to Suomenlinna

Founded in 1748 on a cluster of islands off the coast of Helsinki, the Suomenlinna sea fortress is a cultural treasure. Its construction began in the 18th century, when Finland was still part of the Kingdom of Sweden. The guns that still face west on Kustaanmiekka island are a reminder of the period of the Russian rule in the 19th century.

Suomenlinna was added to the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites in 1991, to be preserved for future generations as a unique example of the military architecture of its era.

Suomenlinna is an irregular bastion fortress constructed on uneven terrain and on separate islands. The fortress also has a special importance, having played a role in the defence of three states – Sweden, Russia and Finland.

SUOMENLINNA FORTRESS TODAY

Suomenlinna is not only one of the foremost attractions in Finland, but also a lively community of some 800 residents. The Governing Body of Suomenlinna, a government agency operating under the Ministry of Education and Culture, is responsible for the restoration, development and maintenance of the fortress as well as managing it as a visitor attraction. The fortifications and old garrison buildings have been restored and converted into residential properties, studios and offices, meeting and event facilities, restaurants and museums.

Many European cultural influences originally made their way to Finland via Suomenlinna. These days, the fortress serves as the setting for a wide variety of cultural events. The island’s artisan and crafting tradition lives on, with many artists and experts in the restoration of traditional sailing ships now based there.
History

1748
Finland is a part of the Kingdom of Sweden. Construction of the sea fortress commences, led by Augustin Ehrensvärd.

1750
Fredrick I of Sweden gives the fortress the name of Sveaborg.

1788
The fortress serves as a naval base during the Russo-Swedish War.

1808
Finnish War. The fortress surrenders to the Russian army and remains a Russian naval base for the next 110 years.

1809
Finland is incorporated as an autonomous part of the Russian Empire.

1855
Crimean War. The Anglo-French fleet bombards the fortress, which sustains heavy damage.

1918
Finnish Civil War. A prisoner-of-war camp is established at the fortress. The fortress is annexed by Finland and named Suomenlinna.

1939
Start of the Second World War. The fortress serves as a coastal artillery, anti-aircraft and submarine base.

1973
The Finnish garrison vacates the island. The Ministry of Education and Culture assumes responsibility for the fortress.

1991
Suomenlinna is added to UNESCO’s list of World Heritage Sites as a unique monument to military architecture.

Getting around Suomenlinna

BLUE ROUTE
The fortress can be accessed on foot. The main route across the fortress runs from north to south and takes in all the key sights. The route is waymarked with blue signs and marked on the map in blue.

Alongside the main route runs a slightly more accessible route that is recommended for visitors with limited mobility, wheelchair users and buggies. The route is not completely accessible but it allows you to bypass some of the steep hills and uneven sections of the Blue Route. Wheelchair-friendly route maps are available from the Visitor Centre and at www.suomenlinna.fi.

TAKE CARE
The fortifications, walls and earthworks stretch over several kilometres and are not fitted with barriers. All visitors accessing the fortress do so at their own risk and must exercise particular caution at all times.

Children must not be left unattended or allowed to climb the walls. Please note that even areas that seem safe may feature unexpected precipices. These may be disguised by vegetation in summer and snow in winter. When visiting the shoreline, it is a good idea to keep an eye on the sea traffic as passing vessels may cause strong currents. In winter, conditions underfoot may be slippery, please take care.
Guided walking tours

Guided walking tours are the best way to find out more about Suomenlinna’s colourful history. All tours start at the Suomenlinna Centre. The tours last for approximately one hour and take visitors to the islands of Susisaari and Kustaanmiekka. For start times, please contact the Visitor Centre or visit www.suomenlinna.fi.

The guided tours are run by the Ehrensvärd Society (www.suomenlinnatours.com). Tour guiding services on Suomenlinna are subject to licensing. Only Ehrensvärd Society guides are authorised to run tours in the fortress.

**SUMMER SEASON** · Guided walking tours in Finnish, Swedish, English and Russian take place daily from June to August.

**OTHER TIMES OF THE YEAR** · Guided walking tours in English and Russian take place at weekends.

**PRIVATE TOURS** · Private tours are available throughout the year in a variety of languages by arrangement.

**FOR CHILDREN** · During summer, historic adventure tours for children are available in Finnish and Swedish.

Routes for your mobile

You can also get to know the fortress using mobile maps that are free to download. For instructions on how to download maps for these themed routes, visit app.suomenlinna.fi. Use our free smartphone app to download the route maps before your visit. Further information on the routes is available from the Visitor Centre. The Centre also has free wireless internet access.

Museums

There are a total of six museums on Suomenlinna. The museums are located throughout the fortress and each sells their own tickets. However, during the summer season, you can also buy a combined ticket to all the museums, valid for the whole summer (from 1 June to 31 August).

**SUOMENLINNA MUSEUM** · The main museum of the fortress tells the story of Suomenlinna from its earliest days to present time. A short film, charting the island’s past, runs every half an hour. The film is available in nine languages, Finnish, Swedish, English, German, French, Russian, Japanese, Spanish and Chinese. The duration of the film is 25 minutes.
**VESIKKO SUBMARINE**

37 Vesikko is a Finnish submarine, built in the 1930s, that served in the Second World War. Fully restored, Vesikko is an opportunity for visitors to get a feel for the confined spaces the submariners worked in and to find out more about the technology available at the time.

**MANÈGE OF THE MILITARY MUSEUM**

16 The Manège exhibition charts the history of the Finnish military and Finnish soldiers across the centuries, through both war and peacetime.

**SUOMENLINNA TOY MUSEUM**

15 The Toy Museum collection comprises thousands of historic toys from the early 19th century until the 1960s. A delicious range of cakes and other treats are available from the museum café.

**EHRENSVÄRD MUSEUM**

30 The museum, originally the official residence of the fortress’s commandants, showcases the history of Suomenlinna’s Swedish period. The first person to take possession of the building, was the fortress’s founder, Augustin Ehrensvärd.

**CUSTOMS MUSEUM**

28 The Customs Museum, housed in a former prison, showcases the history of customs and smuggling in Finland.
Cafés and restaurants

Suomenlinna Brewery, a first-rate restaurant and brewery with a comfortable outdoor seating area, is located in the Russian-era Jetty Barracks vaults by the ferry quay. The fortress’s own beers come highly recommended.

Viaporin Deli & Café, located in the Jetty Barracks near the ferry quay, offers salads, sandwiches, pastries and ice creams as well as freshly brewed coffee. You can choose to sit in or take away.

Restaurant Klubi 20 has operated in the same building since 1926 and epitomises the atmosphere of an old military club. This historic haunt is also a favourite hang out of the island’s residents.

This cosy café on the main route in the Russian merchants’ quarter, is located in a historic wooden house. The menu includes fresh cakes and pastries, soups, fresh coffee and soft drinks.

The Ice Cellar was built in 1898 to serve as a larder for the officers’ families. As well as light lunches, visitors to the café can enjoy displays of local art and other cultural events.

Café Vanille

Suomenlinna Centre Café

A restaurant at the island’s docks, with a menu featuring soups, pasta dishes and fresh salads. The sunny outdoor seating area offers the perfect view down to the guest marina.

Restaurant Café Chapman enjoys a central location at Artillery Bay. During the winter season it serves lunches and in summer remains open into the evening with a full à la carte menu.

Located amidst a historic park, this summertime café serves soups, cakes and soft drinks. The outdoor seating area offers stunning views out to sea.

Located on the southern tip of Suomenlinna, Walhalla was opened in 1952 as an official venue to entertain delegates attending the Olympic Games in Helsinki. Walhalla is an evening restaurant known for its exquisite food. The sunny terrace has magnificent views of the sea.

At this pizza restaurant located adjacent to Walhalla, visitors can choose to sit inside the labyrinthine fortress or outside on the sun-drenched terrace.
Shopping

JAÄKELLARI ART SHOP
14 Local crafts, prints and books. Art exhibitions.

SUOMENLINNA TOY MUSEUM SHOP
15 The shop at the Toy Museum sells genuine Steiff and Hermann teddy bears, Käthe Kruse dolls and gifts.

SUOMENLINNA CENTRE SHOP
18 The Suomenlinna Centre shop sells souvenirs, postcards, books and gifts.

ARTS AND CRAFTS SUMMER SHOP B34
32 High-quality arts and crafts made on the island.

MUSEUM SHOP
32 The Museum shop sells Suomenlinna-themed souvenirs, postcards, posters, books and clothing.

Jetty barracks Gallery
2 The Helsinki Artists’ Association gallery exhibits contemporary art.

HIAP GALLERY AUGUSTA
33 Gallery Augusta is run by the Helsinki International Artist Programme (Hiap) and features a wide range of art exhibitions and other cultural events.

POT VIAPORI CERAMIC STUDIO
34 Sells ceramics made in Suomenlinna.

GLASS STUDIO HYTTI
35 Resident Suomenlinna glass artists are based at Glass Studio Hytti.

Tokuyuan Japanese tea room
35 The traditional art of Japanese tea is practised at Tokuyuan. The tea room is only available for private tea ceremonies.

GROCERY SHOP
4 The island grocery shop is open daily and welcomes residents and visitors alike.

HOSTEL SUOMENLINNA
5 The hostel, based at the island’s old schoolhouse, is open all year round. There are a total of 40 beds and guests can choose from 2–3 and 6–10 person rooms.

SUOMENLINNA CHURCH
8 Suomenlinna Church is a popular venue for weddings, concerts and other events.

SUOMENLINNA LIBRARY
11 The library operates a lending service but also acts as a venue for exhibitions and a wide variety of events. Free internet access.

KUNTONANEESI GYM
17 This fitness venue, complete with a traditional Finnish sauna, is the ideal setting for office away days, themed sporting events and courses.

GUEST MARINA
20 For visitors arriving by boat, the marina next to Café Bar Valimo has 40 berths and sauna and shower facilities available for guest use.

PICNIC SHELTER
41 The picnic shelter on Kustaanmiekka island seats 60 and is open to all visitors during the summer season.

Open all year
Open in summer or during events

For more information on our services and opening hours, please visit www.suomenlinna.fi
Suomenlinna is accessible only by water. The journey takes some 15 to 20 minutes. The ferry operates throughout the year, while waterbus services are limited to the summer season only.

**FERRY**
1. The ferry departs from the east side of the Market Square, opposite the Presidential Palace. In Suomenlinna, the ferry departs from the main quay on Iso Mustasaari island. The ferry service is part of the city transport network and all Helsinki Region Transport Authority (HSL) tickets are valid on this service. Please purchase tickets prior to boarding the ferry from the ticket machine on the quayside. In summer, tickets are also available from the ticket booth at the Market Square.

**JT-LINE WATERBUS**
19 43 46. The waterbuses to Suomenlinna depart from the Market Square cruise departures area. In Suomenlinna, the waterbus departs from the Suomenlinna Centre pier and makes an additional stop at the King’s Gate. Some services also make a stop at Lonna Island. Tickets for this service can be purchased at the ticket booth at the Market Square or onboard the waterbus. Please note that Helsinki Region Transport Authority (HSL) tickets are not valid on this service.