

Turku

Southwest Finland · Finland

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Turku is Finland's oldest city, founded in the 13th century where the Aura River meets the Archipelago Sea. It was the country's capital until 1812, and the medieval Turku Castle and Turku Cathedral still anchor the historic centre.

Today Turku feels compact and easy-going. The riverbanks are lined with cafés, museums, and permanently moored restaurant boats, and the old university city has a relaxed, youthful energy. It suits travelers who want a walkable dose of history and Baltic island scenery without the crowds of Helsinki.

The champion runner *Paavo Nurmi*, one of the most decorated Olympians in history, was born here and is still a local point of pride.

When to visit

Summers (June to August) are mild and the easiest time to visit, with long daylight hours and outdoor life along the river. Spring and autumn are cooler but pleasant for walking. Winters are cold and dark, though the Christmas markets and the Old Great Square's Christmas Peace ceremony give the season its own charm.

Plan around **Ruisrock**, one of Europe's oldest rock festivals, held on Ruissalo island every July — book accommodation well ahead if visiting then.

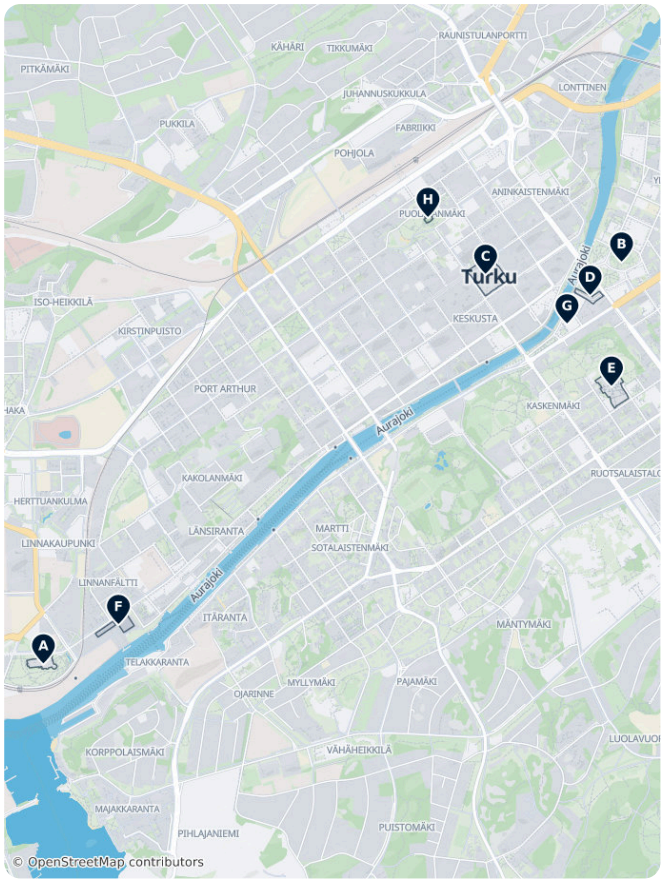
MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	-2° / 4° Feels like -7°	-7° / -20°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	-2° / 3° Feels like -7°	-8° / -22°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	2° / 8° Feels like -2°	-5° / -14°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Fair Fair for cycling	8° / 15° Feels like 5°	0° / -5°	Dry air · Calm winds
May	Great Great for cycling	14° / 22°	4° / -1°	Dry air · Calm winds
June	Great Great for sightseeing	19° / 26°	9° / 4°	Dry air · Calm winds
July	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 28°	13° / 9°	14 rainy days · Calm winds
August	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 26°	12° / 8°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
September	Great Great for cycling	16° / 21°	8° / 3°	Dry air · Calm winds
October	Fair Fair for cycling	9° / 14° Feels like 6°	4° / -3°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Poor Poor for sightseeing	3° / 9° Feels like 0°	0° / -9°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	0° / 6° Feels like -5°	-4° / -16°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: June, July, August

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

July afternoons are the warmest and sunniest of the year, though rain showers are common. Midwinter days get only a few hours of daylight, so plan for a short sightseeing window.

Top sights



A Turku Castle is Finland's largest surviving medieval building, founded in the late 13th century on the banks of the Aura River. It served as an administrative and military stronghold for centuries and today holds a large historical museum.

B Turku Cathedral is Finland's only medieval basilica and the country's most important Lutheran church. Its noon bells are broadcast on national radio every day.

C Market Square is the city's central square and has hosted its market since the Middle Ages. Weekday mornings still bring farmers selling fresh produce and flowers.

Next to the cathedral, D Old Great Square was Turku's administrative and commercial heart from the city's founding until the Great Fire of 1827. Its surviving mansions now house cultural venues.

E Luostarinmäki is an open-air museum of wooden houses and workshops that survived the 1827 fire, giving a rare look at how the whole city once looked.

F Forum Marinum covers Finland's maritime history and includes historic ships moored on the river that visitors can board.

G Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova combines a medieval archaeological site, excavated on the spot, with a contemporary art museum in the same building — a striking pairing of old and new.

H Turku Art Museum is one of Finland's leading art museums, set in a Jugendstil building on a hill above the centre.

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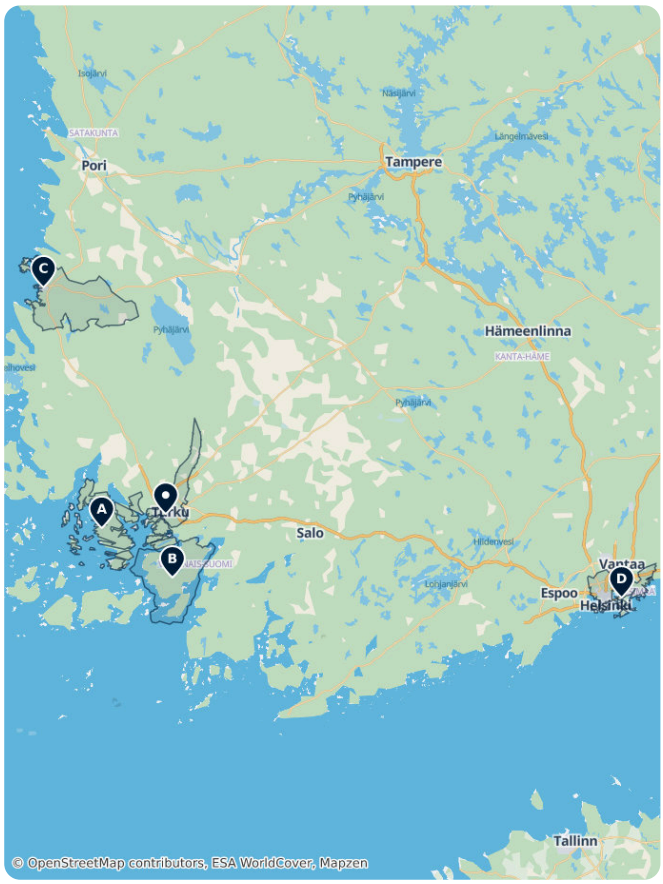
What to experience

- Have a drink or dinner on one of the permanently moored restaurant boats lining the Aura River — a Turku tradition found nowhere else in Finland quite like this.
- Join the crowd at Old Great Square on 24 December to hear the centuries-old Christmas Peace declared from the Brinkkala Mansion balcony, broadcast live across the country.
- Walk the riverside promenade at sunset between the castle and the cathedral, when the old warehouses and church towers catch the evening light.
- If visiting in July, spend a day at **Ruisrock** on Ruissalo island, one of the longest-running rock festivals in Europe.

Day trips

Turku sits at the gateway to Finland's Archipelago Sea, so several of its best day trips are close by water or a short drive away.

- **A** Naantali — about 20 minutes by bus or car, this small spa town has a wooden Old Town, a working convent church, and Moomin World, a theme park based on the beloved Finnish books.
- **B** Parainen and the village of Nagu, on the **Archipelago Trail** — roughly 45–75 minutes by car or ferry, these island communities give an easy taste of the Archipelago Sea's thousands of islets, with cottages, cafés, and coastal views.
- **C** Rauma — about 1.5 hours by train or car, Old Rauma is a UNESCO World Heritage wooden town with cobbled streets and colourful 18th-century houses, still lived in today.
- **D** Helsinki — about 2 hours by train, Finland's capital is a worthwhile longer trip for travelers with an extra day, with frequent direct connections from Turku's main station.



Getting there

- **By air**: Turku Airport (TKU) has scheduled flights mainly to Stockholm and a handful of domestic routes; it is 8 km from the centre, a 15–20 minute bus or taxi ride. Most international travelers instead fly into Helsinki-Vantaa Airport (HEL) and continue to Turku by train or bus, about 2 hours.
- **By train**: Direct trains connect Turku's main railway station with Helsinki roughly every hour, about 2 hours each way.
- **By bus**: Long-distance coaches link Turku with Helsinki, Tampere, and other Finnish cities from the bus station next to the railway station.
- **By ferry**: Turku is one of Finland's main ferry ports to Sweden, with large overnight ships sailing daily to Stockholm from the passenger harbour a few kilometres southwest of the centre.

Getting around

- **Public transit**: Föli operates Turku's city buses. Tickets can be bought with a contactless bank card or phone directly on board, or through the Föli app, which is usually cheaper. Föli journey planner
- **Taxi / ride-hailing**: Regular taxis are easy to find in the centre; a national ride-hailing app also operates in the city.
- **On foot / cycling**: The historic centre is small and flat, so most sights are within easy walking distance of each other. Cycling is popular and the city has a public bike-share system for the warmer months.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The historic centre is compact and flat, so most sights are within a 15-20 minute walk of each other.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

High

Turku is flat and bike-friendly, with a public bike-share system running through the warmer months.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Not for the city itself — the centre is small and walkable. A car becomes useful for exploring the Archipelago Trail and smaller islands at your own pace.
- **Parking**: Paid street parking and multi-storey car parks are available around the centre; pay by app or at machines, and rates are highest on weekdays.
- **Restrictions**: The Market Square and some central streets are pedestrian-only during market hours; watch for signage rather than assuming full vehicle access.

Food & drink

Turku sits on the coast, so fresh Baltic fish — herring, salmon, and vendace — appears on menus across the city, especially in autumn during the traditional herring market on the Market Square.

For a distinctive spot, browse Market Hall, the second-oldest market hall in Finland, where small stalls sell local delicacies and light meals under one roof. For a more general answer, the restaurant boats and terraces along the Aura River are the easiest place to find a good meal with a view.

What to eat & drink

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Karjalanpiirakka
Thin rye pastry filled with rice porridge, traditionally topped with egg butter.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Salmiakki
Salty liquorice candy that divides visitors — Finns are devoted to it.

Leipäjuusto
Mild, squeaky "bread cheese", usually served warm with cloudberry jam.

DRINKS

Koskenkorva · Koskenkorva Viina
Finland's best-known grain vodka, often mixed into long drinks like the Lonkero.

SIGNATURE DISHES

Ruisleipä
Dense, dark sourdough rye bread eaten with almost every meal.

Poronkäristys
Sautéed reindeer served with mashed potatoes and lingonberry jam, a Lapland classic.

Kalakukko
Fish and pork baked inside a thick rye-bread crust, a specialty of the Savonia region.

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Safety & health

Turku is a safe city for travelers by any standard. Petty theft can happen around the railway station and busy nightlife areas late at night, so keep an eye on bags and phones as you would anywhere. Winter brings icy pavements, so wear shoes with grip if visiting between November and March.

History

Turku grew up around the Turku Castle and the Turku Cathedral in the 13th century and quickly became the political and religious centre of medieval Finland, then a province of Sweden. For centuries it was the country's largest city and its capital.

Russia annexed Finland in 1809, and the capital moved to Helsinki in 1812. The Great Fire of 1827 then destroyed most of the wooden city centre, including large parts of the old Old Great Square, and Turku's university relocated to Helsinki soon after — cementing the new capital's rise while Turku rebuilt in stone.

Despite the fire, pockets of the old wooden city survived, preserved today at Luostarinmäki. Turku remains Finland's religious capital: the Archbishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church still has his seat at Turku Cathedral.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Finland at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

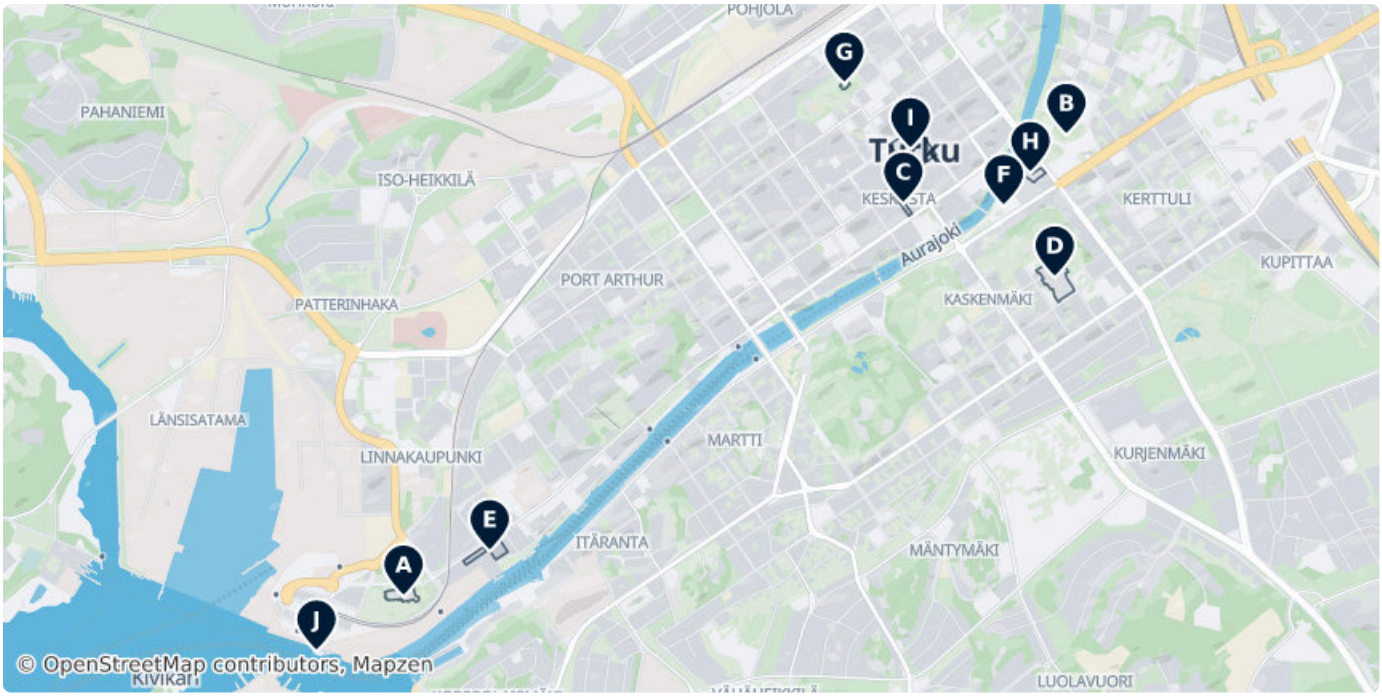
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Finnish, Swedish

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Turku's Essential Treasures

Turku, Finland's oldest city, preserves its medieval legacy through the 13th-century Turku Castle and the national shrine, Turku Cathedral. The Aura River serves as the city's heart, connecting historic sites like the Old Great Square with the Luostarinmäki open-air museum, which survived the Great Fire of 1827. Cultural highlights include the Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova museum, showcasing underground medieval ruins alongside modern art, and the Forum Marinum maritime center. Local life centers on the traditional 19th-century Market Hall and the bustling Market Square.





A Turku Castle

Turku Castle is a medieval building in the city of Turku in Finland. Together with Turku Cathedral, the castle is one of the oldest...

Linnankatu 80, 20100 Turku (60.43525, 22.22888)

Tu–Su 10:00–18:00

turunlinna.fi



B Turku Cathedral

Turku Cathedral is the only medieval basilica in Finland and the Mother Church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

Tuomiokirkonkatu 1, 20500 Turku, Finland (60.45222, 22.27833)

turunseurakunnat.fi/portal/en/turku_cat... , +358 2261 7100



C Turku Market Hall

Designed by architect Gustaf Nyström and opened in 1896, this historic hall houses approximately 40 vendors. It features traditional Finnish food stalls, local bakeries, and specialty counters selling fish, cheese, and reindeer meat.

Eerikinkatu 16, 20100 Turku (60.44970, 22.26616)

Mo–Fr	08:00–18:00
Sa	08:00–16:00

kauppahalli.fi



D Luostarinmäki

Luostarinmäki Handicrafts Museum is an open-air museum in Turku, Finland.

Vartiovuorenkatu 2, 20101 Turku, FI (60.44698, 22.27746)

turku.fi/en/luostarinmaki-handicrafts-mu..., +358-22620350



E Forum Marinum

Forum Marinum is maritime museum located in Turku, Finland.

Linnankatu 72 (60.43691, 22.23531)

Tu–Su	10:00–18:00

forum-marinum.fi, +358 40 5525477



F Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova

Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova is a museum in central Turku, Finland. The museum is housed in a building known as the Rettig palace, originally...

Itäinen Rantakatu 4-6, 20700 Turku (60.44961, 22.27367)

Tu–Su	11:00–18:00

avan.fi, +358 20 7181640



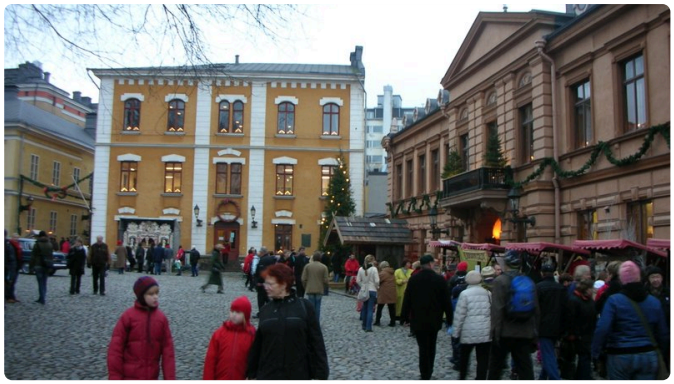
G Turku Art Museum

One of Finland's prime art museums displaying a vast variety of artworks. The building in itself is quite a masterpiece.

Aurakatu 26, 20100 Turku (60.45411, 22.26177)

Tu–Su	11:00–19:00, 11:00–17:00

turuntaidemuseo.fi, +358 2 2627100



H Old Great Square

The Old Great Square is a medieval market square located in the city centre of Turku, Finland.

5 Vanha Suurtori, Turku 20500, Finland (60.45082, 22.27565)



I Market Square

The Market Square is a city square in the city of Turku, in Finland. It is located in the city's VI District, and is generally considered...

Turku (60.45170, 22.26670)

Mo–Fr	07:00–18:00
Sa	07:00–15:00

turku.fi/kauppatori

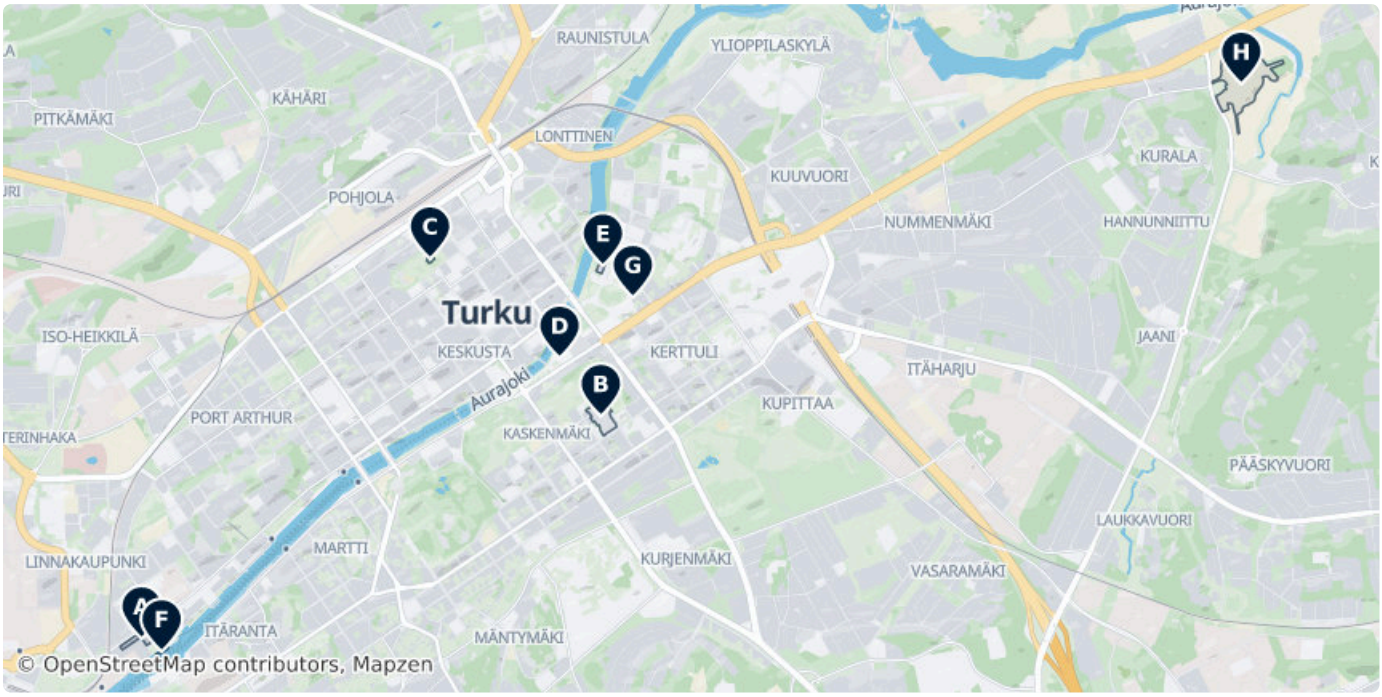
J Viking Line: Turku

Major passenger ferry terminal situated near Turku Castle at the mouth of the Aura River. It provides daily maritime connections to Stockholm and Mariehamn, serving as a key gateway for travel across the Baltic Sea.

(60.43323, 22.22239)

Turku Museums & Galleries

Turku's cultural scene spans maritime history, medieval archaeology, and modern art. The Forum Marinum and the 1902 ship Suomen Joutsen document seafaring traditions along the Aura River. Luostarinmäki preserves 18th-century wooden architecture that survived the 1827 fire, while Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova integrates archaeological ruins with contemporary galleries in the historic Rettig Palace. The Turku Art Museum focuses on Finnish masters within a National Romantic granite building, and the Sibelius Museum explores musical heritage in a notable Brutalist structure.





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Tu–Su	11:00–19:00, 11:00–17:00

turuntaidemuseo.fi, +358 2 2627100



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Itäinen Rantakatu 4-6, 20700 Turku (60.44961, 22.27367)

Tu–Su	11:00–18:00

avan.fi, +358 20 7181640



E Sibelius Museum

The Sibelius Museum is a museum of music, named after the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius.

Biskopsgatan 17, 20500 Turku, Finland (60.45378, 22.27766)

Tu	11:00–16:00
We	10:00–18:00
Th–Su	11:00–16:00

web.abo.fi/fak/hf/musik/index_eng.php, +358 221 54494



F Suomen Joutsen

Suomen Joutsen is a steel-hulled full-rigged ship with three square rigged masts. Built in 1902 by Chantiers de Penhoët in St.

4 Meritullinkatu, 20100, Finland (60.43633, 22.23715)

G Makasiini Contemporary

Contemporary art gallery located in a historic brick warehouse near Turku Cathedral. It hosts rotating exhibitions featuring international and Finnish artists, focusing on modern painting, sculpture, and installations.

Tuomiokirkonkatu 6 (60.45235, 22.28040)

Tu–Fr	11:00–18:00
Sa–Su	12:00–16:00

makasiinicontemporary.com

H Kylämäki Village

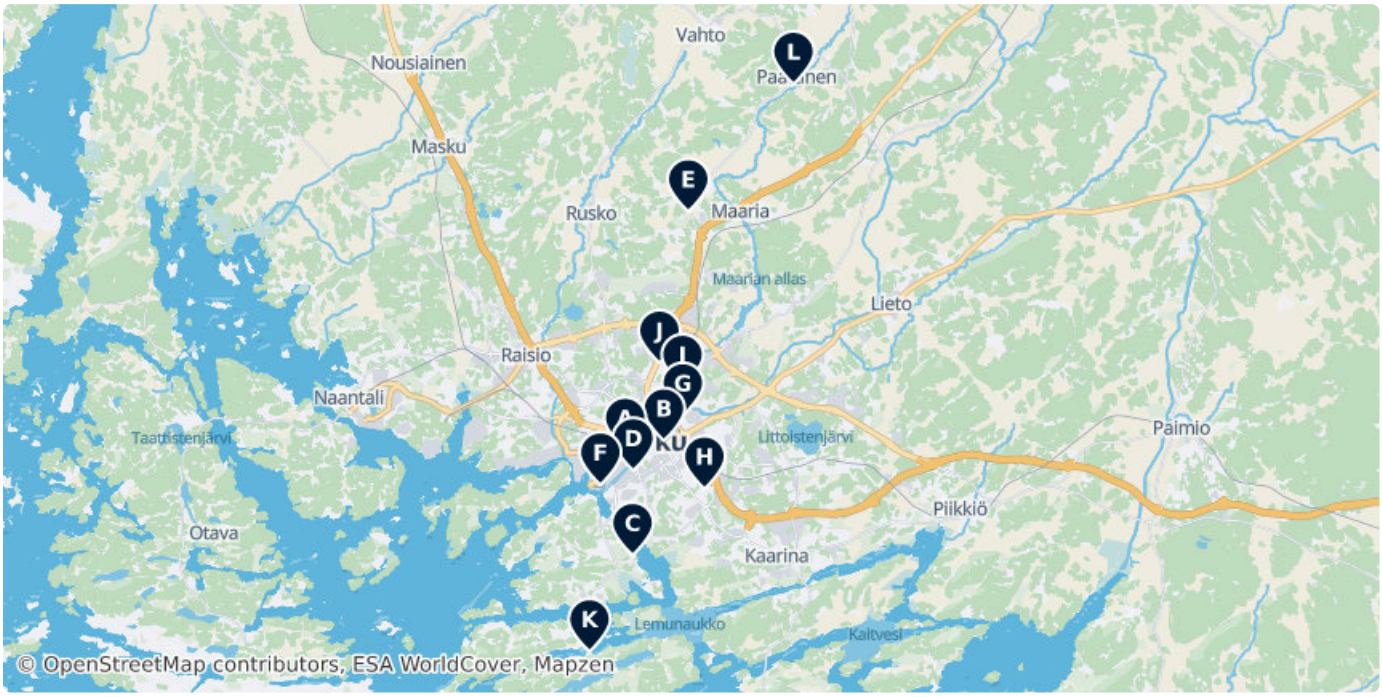
A small open-air museum based around a reconstructed 1950's farm. Over the summer, there are themes which change every week.

Jaanintie 45, 20540 Turku (60.46200, 22.33626)

turku.fi/kuralankylamaki, +358 2262 0420

Turku's Sacred Sites

Turku's religious landscape spans over seven centuries, anchored by the medieval Turku Cathedral, the Mother Church of Finland. This collection includes significant Lutheran landmarks like the 14th-century St. Mary's Church and the neo-Gothic St. Michael's. Modern architecture is represented by Erik Bryggman's Resurrection Chapel and the copper-clad Ecumenical Art Chapel. Beyond Christian sites, the list features the Liên Tâm Monastery, the first Buddhist monastery inaugurated in Finland, highlighting the city's diverse spiritual and architectural heritage.





A St Michael's Church, Turku

Michael's Church is a church situated in central Turku. It is named after Archangel Michael and was finished in 1905.

Puistokatu 16a, 20100 Turku (60.44872, 22.24792)



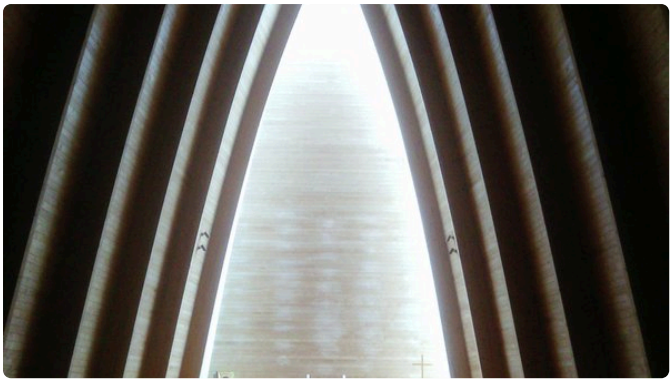
B Turku Cathedral

Turku Cathedral is the only medieval basilica in Finland and the Mother Church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

Tuomiokirkonkatu 1, 20500 Turku (60.45245, 22.27855)

Mo–Su Closed

turuntuomiokirkko.fi, +358 40 341 7100



C Ecumenical Art Chapel

A truly marvellous piece of modern architecture, made from copper and wood. The shape of the building is unique and outstanding.

Seiskarinkatu 35, 20900 Turku, Finland
(60.40767, 22.25368)

taidekappeli.fi/yhteystiedot.html, +358 22657 777



D Martin's Church

Martin's Church in Turku, Finland is the main church of Martin's parish, founded in 1921.

(60.44081, 22.25433)



E Liên Tâm Monastery

Liên Tâm Monastery is a Buddhist monastery located in Moisio, Turku. It is the first Buddhist monastery inaugurated in Finland.

(60.54171, 22.29778)

lientam.fi



F Turun linnan kirkko

A Lutheran church located within the historic Turku Castle. It features a simple, dignified interior integrated into the medieval fortress and is a popular venue for weddings.

(60.43521, 22.22819)

turku.fi/turun-linna/vuokrattavat-tilat/linnan-kirkko



G St. Catherine's Church, Turku

St. Catherine's Church is located in Nummi, a suburb of Turku, Finland, in the same district as Turku Student Village.

46 Kirkkotie, Turku 20540, Finland (60.46222, 22.29355)



H Ylösnousemuskappeli

Designed by architect Erik Bryggman and completed in 1941, this chapel is a masterpiece of Nordic Modernism. It is noted for its integration with the surrounding nature through large side windows.

(Unnamed Road), 20720, Finland (60.43368, 22.31058)



I St. Mary's Church, Turku

St. Mary's Church is a medieval stone church located in Maaria, in Turku, Finland.

Sorolaisenkatu 1, 20380 Turku (60.47336, 22.29326)

J Pallivahan kirkko

A modernist church designed by architect Pekka Pitkänen and completed in 1968. The building is characterized by its geometric concrete design and serves the parish of Maaria.

Paltankatu, 20360 Turku, Finland (60.48278, 22.27500)

turunseurakunnat.fi/portal/fi/kirkot/pal..., +358 40 3417150

K Kakskerran kirkko

An 18th-century stone church located on Kakskerta island. Built between 1765 and 1769, it was designed by architect Christian Friedrich Schröder and sits in a scenic coastal setting.

(60.37000, 22.21966)

L Paattisten kirkko

A wooden cruciform church completed in 1909 and designed by architect Helge Rancken. It is the fourth church to be built on this site in the Paattinen district.

(60.59135, 22.38108)

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