

## Unesco World Heritage Case Studies, Finland

### Suomenlinna

In 1991, the Suomenlinna fortress was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List as a unique monument of military architecture. Another special feature of the fortress is that in the course of its history it has served in the defence of three realms: Sweden, Russia and Finland.

Moreover, it continues to be a living, tended and inhabited district of the city of Helsinki. The World Heritage Site includes seven islands. The number of visitors to Suomenlinna has continued to grow, and with over 900,000 visitors every year, the sea fortress is one of Finland's most popular tourist destinations. Suomenlinna attracts visitors from both Finland and abroad: it offers an ideal environment for exploring a historical world heritage site, or just spending a day relaxing. Many visitors come to the island during the summer, but the number of wintertime visitors is steadily growing.

The sea fortress's appeal lies in its history, sights and maritime environment. Suomenlinna combines large visitor numbers with cultural values that require conservation measures, the need among the Helsinki region's population to have local recreational sites, and the day-to-day life of local residents. Sustainable tourism methods must be leveraged to ensure the site's cultural, social, ecological and economical prosperity.

Sustainable tourism aims at minimising the negative impacts of tourism and maximising its positive impacts. The Governing Body of Suomenlinna strives to take sustainability into account in all its operations and also requires its stakeholders to comply with sustainable practices.

In 2020, the Governing Body of Suomenlinna was awarded the Sustainable Travel Finland label as a sign of valued and long-term work towards sustainable tourism. (Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) is Visit Finland's programme for sustainable tourism that aims to offer tourism companies and destinations a concrete development model for sustainable tourism.)



See below picture of the Suomenlinna's sustainable tourism strategy



Learn more about Suomenlinna and sustainability

<https://fmedia.fi/suomenlinna360/>

## Verla

Verla Groundwood and Board Mill, located in the northern part of the Kymi River Valley in southeast Finland, consists of the Mill, the associated residential area and the power plants. The mill buildings and the workers' houses mostly date from the 1890s and from the beginning of the 20th century. The property is a very well preserved example of a forest industry settlement of the late 19th century. Similar communities were established in coniferous forest zones in northern Europe and in North America, where wood as a raw material and water as a source of energy were easily at hand.

The first groundwood mill in Verla was founded in 1872 and the board mill began operations ten years later. The existing buildings, which are architecturally harmonious, date back to the turn of the 20th century. The mill itself ceased to operate in 1964, and all the machines and items related to production were left in the mill as they were when the production ceased. The buildings and the machines were carefully conserved and turned into a museum, and the Verla Mill Museum was officially opened in 1972. Verla's Groundwood and Board Mill became Finland's first factory museum in 1972. The museum is located in the village of Verla, in the northern part of the Kymenlaakso region, and is part of the Verla World Heritage site. The property itself consists of approximately 50 buildings in an area of 23 ha.



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The Verla Groundwood and Board Mill with its machinery, the Verlankoski Rapids and power plants, the associated residential area and installations form a visually and functionally intact complex. The property includes all the built elements associated with production, habitation and leisure in the mill village, as well as the rapids, the surrounding forests, and the prehistoric rock painting.

Verla was added to the World Heritage List in 1996 on the basis of criterion (iv): the Verla Groundwood and Board Mill and its associated habitation are an outstanding and remarkably well-preserved example of the small-scale rural industrial settlement associated with pulp and board production that flourished in northern Europe and North America in the 19th and early 20th centuries, of which only a handful survive to the present day.

Read more about sustainable travel at Verla

<https://www.verla.fi/en/visitverla/sustainabletravelverla>



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